

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

The Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF) administered by the Health Bureau invites funding applications for investigator-initiated research projects and health promotion projects from today (December 28) onwards. Applications from locally based tertiary institutions, hospitals, medical schools, non-governmental organisations or other appropriate centres, units and services are invited.

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 healthcare system, enhance healthcare practices, advance the standard and quality of care, and promote clinical excellence, through generation and application of evidence-based scientific knowledge derived from local health and medical research. It also provides funding support to evidence-based health promotion projects that help people adopt healthier lifestyles by enhancing awareness, changing adverse health behaviours and creating a conducive environment that supports good health practices.

The HMRF emphasises the importance of the translational potential of research findings, and therefore supports applications on the following research projects:

1. Clinical research (including patient-oriented research, epidemiological and behavioural studies, outcomes research and health services research);
2. Infectious diseases research with public health implications from bench to bedside and at community level and with translational value; and
3. Clinical research based on Chinese medicine theory or clinical research on Chinese medicine theory and methodology.

Applications in the following areas will be accepted for consideration by the HMRF:

1. public health, human health and health services (e.g. primary healthcare, non-communicable diseases, Chinese medicine, etc.);
2. prevention, treatment and control of infectious diseases with public health implications;
3. advanced medical research which applies advanced technologies to facilitate the translation of knowledge generated from health and health

services or infectious diseases studies into clinical practice and to inform health policy; and

4. health promotion that facilitates mobilisation of local resources to promote good health and prevention of illness in the community.

Higher priority for funding will be given to proposals addressing this year's thematic priorities, which are infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, primary healthcare, preventive medicine, telehealth and advanced technology as well as clinical trials and implementation science.

The grant ceiling is \$1.5 million per project with a grant duration not exceeding three years. As for larger-scale pilot studies such as those evaluating trialability and scalability for future implementation and small-scale research with achievable objectives, submission can be made to apply for a seed grant which has a grant ceiling of \$500,000 per project.

Only one application from each principal applicant is allowed, either a new submission 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 submission.

Applications will be subject to a two-tier peer review. The vetting will take into account scientific merit, local relevance, translational potential or value of the proposals, sustainability of health promotion projects, capacity of the administering institutions, 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 \(eGMS\)](#) on or before 6pm on March 28, 2024 (Hong Kong time). Briefing sessions and training workshops for grant applications, to be held in January 2024, are now open for [registration](#).

Details are now available on [the website](#) of the Research Fund Secretariat. Enquiries can be made by e-mail to rfs@healthbureau.gov.hk.