

Public Policy Research Funding Scheme launches special round of applications

The Assessment Panel of the Public Policy Research (PPR) Funding Scheme announced today (November 6) that a special round of research studies to investigate the underlying causes of the recent social incidents and the deep-seated problems of society is now open for applications.

The PPR Funding Scheme, together with the Strategic Public Policy Research (SPPR) Funding Scheme, is managed by the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office. The Funding Schemes are unique in Hong Kong in that they are the only government-subsidised funding schemes dedicated to fostering and supporting public policy research in Hong Kong. Applications for the PPR Funding Scheme are accepted throughout the year while those for the SPPR Funding Scheme are invited once a year.

The Chairman of the Assessment Panel, Professor Joseph Lee, said, "In view of the recent social incidents that started in June 2019, the Assessment Panel believes that the research community could contribute to identifying the underlying causes and recommending solutions to address the deep-seated problems of Hong Kong society through conducting evidence-based policy research.

"The Assessment Panel has therefore decided to launch a special round of funding applications under the PPR Funding Scheme to support research studies on topics relating to the underlying causes of the recent social incidents, as well as important political, economic, cultural and societal issues relating to the deep-seated problems of society. As with other research studies funded by the two funding schemes, research reports of the funded projects under the special round will be made public upon satisfactory completion."

Professor Lee added, "Noting that the setting up of an independent panel comprising community leaders, professionals and academics to examine and review society's deep-seated problems was one of the actions announced by the Chief Executive on September 4, the Assessment Panel believes that the research reports under the special round of the PPR Funding Scheme can provide useful data and input for the independent panel's reference."

For the purpose of this special round of the PPR Funding Scheme, the Assessment Panel has identified a list of possible research topics, which are provided in the Annex.

A sum of up to \$500,000 for a period of up to six months may be granted to each approved project under the special round.

Applications for the special round should be submitted on or before November 29.

Assessments will be conducted by the Assessment Panel, which is chaired by and comprises experienced academics. A declaration of interest system is in place to ensure that the assessments are fair and impartial.

Research quality and relevance to the underlying causes of the recent social incidents and society's deep-seated problems are the primary considerations in evaluating research proposals under the special round of the PPR Funding Scheme. In considering a research proposal, the Assessment Panel will also take into account factors such as whether the research proposal is solution-oriented, the feasibility and practicality of the proposal, the implementation schedule and the proposed budget.

Details of the special round of the PPR Funding Scheme, including the eligibility criteria, the application method and other related information, are available at www.pico.gov.hk/en/PRFS/specialRound.html. For enquiries, please contact the PPR Funding Scheme Secretariat at 2810 2348 or by email at ppr@pico.gov.hk.