

Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme 2020-21 opens for application

The Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO) today (May 27) announced that the Strategic Public Policy Research (SPPR) Funding Scheme 2020-21 is now open for application.

The SPPR Funding Scheme, together with the Public Policy Research (PPR) Funding Scheme, both managed by PICO, 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. The total annual provision for the two schemes is around \$30 million. Both schemes aim to promote public policy research and evidence-based research to facilitate public policy discussion. Specifically, the SPPR Funding Scheme aims to support longer-term public policy research on strategic themes, build up research capacity, and facilitate collaboration among institutions/think tanks on the strategic themes. Applications for the SPPR Funding Scheme are invited once a year while those for the PPR Funding Scheme are accepted throughout the year.

Thirteen strategic themes have been identified for the SPPR Funding Scheme 2020-21, namely (a) Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area; (b) Belt and Road Initiative; (c) Big Data/Smart City; (d) Innovation and Technology/Artificial Intelligence/Re-Industrialisation; (e) Alternative Procurement Models for Major Infrastructure Projects; (f) Developing Green Finance in Hong Kong; (g) City Branding Strategy for Hong Kong; (h) Consolidating Hong Kong's Position as an International Logistics Hub; (i) Transitional Housing; (j) Children, Youth and Family Development; (k) Ageing Population; (l) Healthcare System Innovation; and (m) Manpower Supply and Development.

A sum ranging from \$3 million to \$5 million may be granted to each successful SPPR project. The duration of research projects will normally last from three to five years. Projects with a shorter duration will be considered if strong justifications are provided.

Applications for the SPPR Funding Scheme 2020-21 should be submitted on or before July 31.

Assessments will be conducted by the independent Assessment Panel set up by PICO which is chaired by and comprises experienced academics. The Panel will determine the assessment criteria and details of the two funding schemes. Applications will be assessed by the Panel and each shortlisted application will be assessed by the Panel as well as local and non-local reviewers, who are academics and experts outside the Panel. To ensure policy relevance of the research proposals, suggestions and views of relevant government bureaux/departments will also be sought for reference by the Assessment Panel. A declaration of interests system is in place to ensure

that the assessments are fair and impartial.

Research quality and the strategic relevance to the public policy development of Hong Kong are the primary considerations in evaluating research proposals under the SPPR Funding Scheme. In considering a research proposal, the Assessment Panel will also take into account factors such as deliverables of the research, the research team's capability, the feasibility and practicality of the proposal, the implementation schedule, and the proposed budget. Institutional support towards capacity building in public policy research (e.g. infrastructure support or matching funds) and any external funding sources and support will also be taken into consideration.

For details of the SPPR Funding Scheme, including eligibility criteria, the strategic themes, composition of the Assessment Panel, the application method and other related information, please visit PICO's website (www.pico.gov.hk/en/PRFS).