APPLICATION TO THE
HEALTH AND MEDICAL
RESEARCH FUND
Outline

• Overview of HMRF
• Scope of HMRF
• Peer Review Process
• Grading & Success Rates
• Monitoring & Reporting
• Timeline
• Application details
Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF)

- Set up in Dec 2011 by consolidating the former
  - Health and Health Services Research Fund (HHSRF)
  - Research Fund for the Control of Infectious Diseases (RFCID)

- HMRF broadens the scope further to support advanced medical research

- The consolidated fund has a capital commitment of $1.4 billion

- HMRF is administered by the Food and Health Bureau (FHB)
Mission of HMRF

• To build research capacity…

• …through the generation and application of evidence-based scientific knowledge in health and medicine to encourage, facilitate, and support health and medical research to:

  • inform health policies
  • improve population health
  • strengthen the health system
  • enhance healthcare practices
  • advance standard and quality of care
  • promote clinical excellence
Grant Size & Eligibility

• **Grant**
  - **$1.2 million** for up to **2 years**
  - Larger size / longer duration may be supported at the discretion of the Grant Review Board
  - Smaller pilot studies are encouraged

• **Open to local researchers working in the**
  - Public sector
  - Private sector
  - Academic sector
Scope of HMRF

- Health & Health Services Research (HHS)
- Infectious Diseases Research (ID)
- Advanced Medical Research (AMR)
Health & Health Services Research

- This area focuses on the cause, treatment, prevention of human diseases and the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of healthcare services
Infectious Diseases

- This area focuses on the research of infectious diseases which pose potential threats to Hong Kong and neighbouring areas.
Advanced Medical Research

• This area focuses on the development and use of new technologies and treatment paradigms to improve human health

• HMRF thematic priorities will be described in more detail in the next presentation
Administrative Requirements

- Principal applicant + Administering institution
- Ethics approval by an institutional board / committee
- Contractual agreement with FHB
  - Terms and conditions of the funding award
  - Rights and obligations of the parties
- Financial arrangement administered by the institution
  - Certified financial statement (for grants <$100,000)
  - Independent audited account (for grants >$100,000)
  - Reimbursement claim form
- Annual progress reports & final report
Peer Review Process

• All applications undergo stringent 2-tier review

• 1\textsuperscript{st} : External Referee Panel (4500+)
  • Renowned experts in their fields
  • 2-4 independent reviews per application

• 2\textsuperscript{nd} : Grant Review Board (GRB) Panel
  • Over 170 local senior health professionals and academics (HoD, CoS, Prof, Assoc Prof)
  • Independent review & panel discussion
Grading of Grant Applications

- Recommended for support
  - Subject to satisfactory response to the external referee + GRB comments
  - Ethical approval / safety clearance

- Not recommended for support

- Reject
Monitoring

• Interim progress report (every 12 months)
• Certified financial statement
• Ad hoc follow-up by Secretariat for projects considered at higher risk
  • e.g. ongoing status of recruitment of vulnerable subjects / rare conditions
• Final report
• Dissemination report
• Audited account
# Evaluation of Research Payback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Output*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Knowledge production (papers, patents, books, etc)</td>
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<td>B. Capacity building (additional qualifications, career advancement, additional funding obtained)</td>
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<td>C. Use of research findings in health system policy / decision making</td>
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<td>D. Application of research findings through changed behaviour and/or practice</td>
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<td>E. Factors influencing the utilisation of research</td>
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<td>F. Health / health service / economic benefits arising from the funded research</td>
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* Output is assessed 2 years after project end date
## Grading of Final Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Excellent</strong></td>
<td>Accepted without revision; dissemination report to be prepared for wider distribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Satisfactory</strong></td>
<td>Accepted by the committee. Minor revisions prior to publication; report may be considered for wider distribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Accepted</strong></td>
<td>Accepted conditional to the revision, re-submission and approval by GRB. Failure to revise may lead to re-grading as a 1 or 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Unacceptable</strong></td>
<td>Returned to the investigators for major revision, including rewriting, re-analysis; report may be re-graded upon re-submission. If still unacceptable, the final 20% of the grant must be withheld.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Rejected</strong></td>
<td>Final report is not accepted. The final 20% of the grant must be withheld.</td>
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Application Timeline 2014/15

• 31 Mar 2015 : Closing date

• Nov 2015 : Decision letters issued
  • PA to respond to GRB & referee comments within 3 weeks

• Dec 2015 : Review of PA responses

• Jan 2016 : Final approval / rejection letters issued; prepare agreements

• Projects to commence within 6 months of final approval letter
Submission of applications

- Submit applications via eGMS by 31 March 2015 (18:00 HKT)
- Pay attention to internal deadline, if any, set by your institution
- Up to two applications (new or resubmission) for each PA
- All co-applicants, Department Head, Finance Office and Research Office must endorse the application
- Application with incomplete signatures will not be accepted
- Acknowledgement email sent to PA once application has been submitted to RFS
Application details (2)

- Grant ceiling: $1.2M per project

- Audit fee allowable:
  - $5,000/project for grant between $100,001 and $1M
  - $10,000/project for grant over $1M

- Indicate the thematic priority(ies) in Section 5 of the application
Application details (3)

Resubmission of applications

➢ For proposal declined in the previous open calls:
  • Address previous ERs/GRB comments
  • To be assessed on the **continued relevance** of the application with respect to knowledge gap, policy needs, translational value and prevailing thematic priorities at the time of resubmission
  • Having satisfactorily addressed previous comments is not a guarantee of funding

➢ For proposals previously declined by other funding agencies, the grant application should contain:
  • All comments raised by the funding agency
  • PA’s response to these comments
  • The revised proposal with changes highlighted
  • Detailed explanation / justification if no change is made in the research proposal
Application details (4)

Regulatory/ethics approval

- Submit ethical/safety/regulatory approvals within **12 weeks** after the announcement of funding decision.
- For clinical trials, confirm with Department of Health if a Clinical Trial Certificate/Medicinal Test Certificate is required as early as practicable (preferably during the submission of application to the HMRF) to avoid delay in project commencement.
- Ensure that the protocol/study design approved by the relevant regulatory body/IRB is the **same** as that approved by HMRF.
Application details (5)

Applicants

- **Track record of the whole project team** will be considered and priority will be given to PA with **demonstrable capability** in research leadership.

- If PA plans to depart from his/her AI, inform the Secretariat **immediately** with a **replacement plan** or the application will be disqualified.
Further Information
http://www.fhb.gov.hk/grants

Research Fund Secretariat
Food and Health Bureau
9/F, Rumsey Street
Multi-Storey Car Park Bldg.
2 Rumsey Street
Sheung Wan
Hong Kong

Email: rfs@fhb.gov.hk