

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

HKU Global Partnership Seed Fund 2016-17

I am pleased to announce the launch of the HKU Global Partnership Seed Fund. Applications are now invited from eligible members of the University.

Background

Our aspiration to become the “Asia’s Global University” is an explicit goal set out in the document “Asia’s Global University, HKU: the next decade, our vision for 2016-2025” under the vision of [3+1] I’s, viz. Innovation, Interdisciplinarity & Internationalization converging to create Impact. The global higher education sector is increasing competitive and rapidly changing. Our Mainland and international efforts have resulted in positive outcomes in recruitment, student and staff demographics, research, teaching, and knowledge exchange. We must sustain our current activities. However, HKU’s impact and visibility beyond Hong Kong and selected regions should be amplified. Opportunities exist to strategically reposition HKU by taking full advantage of our unique attributes, assets, networks, and talent pools. HKU is well situated in a dynamic region of Asia and embodies a tradition that exemplifies the core value and best practices of the international academic community.

Objectives

Multilateral strategic partnership has emerged as an effective means to better position top world universities within the global knowledge node to deliver greater societal impact and secure greater visibility and recognition. Examples are numerous. For HKU, the identification and cultivation of global strategic university partners is critical to help us achieve this ambition. This funding scheme is a pilot established to provide initial funding to enable our staff and students to pursue new, multilateral, cross-disciplinary partnerships with a broad range of organizations including universities, multinational

organizations, industry, non-governmental organizations and public agencies. A modest fund has been set aside to provide support through cost-sharing for these activities that are not normally funded through existing internal and external schemes.

Eligibility

Both teaching staff and students at the University are welcome to submit proposals.

1. Teaching staff: full-time Teachers or other full-time staff who meet the eligibility criteria for the relevant external funding. The category including Research Assistant Professors (RAPs), subject to their contract duration being such that they can oversee the externally funded projects as PI for at least the first year of the project's planned duration. Professors of Practice (PP) are also welcome to apply.
2. Students: Full-time M.Phil and Ph.D students who have completed their first 1 year of studies in HKU; undergraduate and post-graduate students representing University-recognized student organisation. All student proposals must include proof of sponsorship and endorsement from a professorial staff member.

Funding ceiling and conditions

1. The maximum award funded by the University Central for each proposal is HK\$100,000 with funding matched from Departments/Units/Faculties on a cost-sharing model (50:50). Applicant should secure the support from his/her Department/unit/Faculty first before submitting the proposal. In addition to provide matching funds, Departments/units/Faculties have the full discretion and flexibility to top-up the financial support for students and faculty members, as deemed appropriate.
2. Additional matching support from external partner institutions is highly desirable.
3. Proposals that are cross-disciplinary and facilitate gap-filling of existing HKU expertise while capitalizing on current HKU strengths are expected. Projects that foster global initiatives and consortium partnerships are highly encouraged.
4. The scope of the proposal may include but not limited to the following:

- (a) Formation of expert consortium with Mainland and/or international partners as a platform where distinct strengths of each partner can be synergized so the whole group is uniquely differentiated and well-positioned to address pressing global issues as identified by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG) including urbanization, healthy aging, food and water safety, health and wellbeing, and transcultural studies;
- (b) Organizing conferences and workshops to promote sharing of ideas among scholars, policy makers, and business leaders from HK, Mainland, and around the world; particularly welcome are planning and brainstorming workshops to facilitate the development of proposals for collaborative international projects that tackle grand challenges such as those stated in global and regional development agendas including UN SDG, EU Horizon 2020, and Belt/Road;
- (c) Activities in collaboration with outside institutions to promote HKU global visibility, multi-lateral and cross-institutional partnership.
- (d) Innovative ideas, whether nascent or fully elaborated, for how HKU might foster global initiatives and facilitate collaborations with Mainland and/or international partners.
- (e) PI-to-PI research projects, staff and student exchange and mobility activities, and attending conferences that can be funded under existing internal and external schemes are not consistent with the intended goal of this programme.

Application Process

1. The proposal should be no more than 3 pages and cover the following:
 - (a) Names, affiliations, and full contact information of main organizers and participants (from the University and other institutions);
 - (b) Description of the proposed activity: aims, significance, rationale, and alignment with the document “Asia’s Global University, HKU: the next decade, our vision for 2016-2025” and the HKU Global Engagement Strategy (<http://global.hku.hk>);
 - (c) Clearly-defined outcome measures with follow-on activities and funding;
 - (d) Period and timeline of the proposed activities;

- (e) Detailed budget of up to HK\$100,000 from the Global Partnership Seed Fund with additional matching funds from Departments/units/Faculties and external partners. Applicant should secure the support from his/her Department/unit/Faculty first before submitting the proposal. Financial commitment from more than one Faculty is highly encouraged in promoting cross-faculty collaboration. Resources from outside participating institutions are highly valued in promoting cross-institutional partnership.
 - (f) Explanation of why the proposed activity is not normally funded through existing internal and external funding schemes.
2. It is strongly recommended that the Dean(s) of the Faculty of the applicant(s) should comment on the proposal submitted, specify the significance and the anticipated impact to the Faculty/unit/Faculty that would be brought forth by the proposed activity. A letter of financial commitment from external partners is highly encouraged.
 3. Each proposal will be reviewed by a group comprising academic staff and administrative officers on the basis of merit, rationale, creativity, consistency with the intended objectives of the scheme, budget, sustainability, and the impact it will bring in alignment with the document “Asia’s Global University, HKU: the next decade, our vision for 2016-2025” and HKU Global Engagement Strategy.
 4. Proposals will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the fund is exhausted and should be sent to the office of Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global) via email VPglobal@hku.hk Ms. Alexis Wang (alexisww@hku.hk) of the Admission and Academic Liaison Section of the Registry will provide administrative assistance of this scheme.
 5. I should be grateful if Heads / Deans would bring this circular to the attention of Faculty members, research postgraduate and their supervisors as well as undergraduate students and student organisations.

Professor John W Kao

Vice-President & Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global)

April 27, 2016

cc Director, Admissions and Academic Liaison Section