

# Public Policy Research Funding Scheme and Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme

## Guidance Notes

Applicants must read these Guidance Notes carefully in preparing applications. All sections of the application form must be completed with supporting documents wherever required. The English version shall prevail whenever there is any discrepancy between the English and Chinese versions.

### 1. Introduction

The Public Policy Research (PPR) Funding Scheme and the Strategic Public Policy Research (SPPR) Funding Scheme, both managed by the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO), are two of the most well-established government-financed 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 PPR Funding Scheme are accepted throughout the year, while applications for the SPPR Funding Scheme are invited once a year (normally in the second quarter of a year).

#### 1.1 Research Areas

PICO has identified eight major themes for PPR Funding Scheme, namely (a) co-operation with the Mainland; (b) land and housing; (c) economic development; (d) livelihood issues; (e) innovation and technology; (f) education and youth development; (g) environmental protection; and (h) political development and governance with 28 indicative research areas as set out at Annex I. Applicants are encouraged to prepare proposals on these areas but are free to submit proposals on other research areas. The same assessment criteria shall apply to all applications received.

For the SPPR Funding Scheme, PICO will identify strategic themes for each year's application. Proposals with themes falling outside the strategic themes will not be considered generally, unless with exceptional merits. For

2021-22, PICO has identified 14 strategic themes as set out in Annex II. We have also set out in the Appendix to Annex II indicative research areas under the relevant strategic themes, which are of possible interest to the Government, for applicants' reference. Applicants are free to submit proposals on any research areas (other than the indicative research areas) under the 14 strategic themes.

Research quality and the relevance of the proposal to the needs of Hong Kong are the primary criteria in evaluating research proposals.

## **2. Guide to Application**

### **2.1 Eligibility**

The following persons are eligible to apply for funds under the PPR Funding Scheme and the SPPR Funding Scheme -

- (a) academics, teaching/research staff who are teaching or eligible to teach a course in undergraduate programmes or above in degree awarding institutions of categories (A) and (B) listed below;
- (b) visiting scholars/adjunct professors/honorary professors/emeritus professors who are teaching or eligible to teach a course in undergraduate programmes or above in degree awarding institutions of categories (A) and (B) listed below; and
- (c) public policy researchers<sup>1</sup> in local non-profit making public policy research think tanks as stated in category (C) below.

The eligibility of the applicant has to be checked and confirmed by the institutions / think tanks concerned.

The Principal Investigator (PI) should be responsible for the overall management and ownership of the project. There is no limit on the number of Co-Investigator(s) (Co-I(s)) who work with the PI on the project. A PI is eligible to apply for and hold other PPR/SPPR project(s) concurrently.

#### ***(A) Eight degree-awarding institutions funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC)***

- City University of Hong Kong
- Hong Kong Baptist University
- Lingnan University

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<sup>1</sup> The Principal Investigator (PI) in this category must possess relevant public policy research experience.

- The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- The Education University of Hong Kong
- The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
- The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- The University of Hong Kong

**(B) *One publicly-funded and 13 self-financing degree-awarding institutions***

- Caritas Institute of Higher Education
- Centennial College
- Chu Hai College of Higher Education
- Gratia Christian College
- The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
- HKCT Institute of Higher Education
- Hong Kong Metropolitan University
- Hong Kong Nang Yan College of Higher Education
- Hong Kong Shue Yan University
- Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong, Vocational Training Council
- The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts
- Tung Wah College
- UOW College Hong Kong
- Yew Chung College of Early Childhood Education

**(C) *Local non-profit making public policy research think tanks***

Local non-profit making think tanks must be registered in Hong Kong with proven and recognised track records of public policy research. The PI in this category must possess relevant public policy research experience.

## **2.2 Quotas of Applications**

There is no quota on the number of applications for an eligible institution/think tank. But the maximum number of PPR/SPPR projects that a PI can hold concurrently is two normally. It is important that institutions/think tanks should satisfy themselves that the applications are of sufficient quality before they are submitted for consideration.

## **2.3 Research Mode**

Applicants are welcome to propose any innovative research mode to conduct public policy research which will facilitate mutual exchange between the Government and researchers in public policy research, thereby enabling researchers to gain more insights on policy formulation and enhancing the quality of public policy research in Hong Kong.

## **2.4 Project Duration**

### **2.4.1 PPR Funding Scheme**

For the PPR Funding Scheme, the duration of research projects will normally last from six to 12 months. Projects with a longer duration up to three years will be considered if strong support and justifications are provided.

### **2.4.2 SPPR Funding Scheme**

For the SPPR Funding Scheme, the duration of research projects will normally last from three to five years. Projects with a shorter duration will be considered if strong support and justifications are provided.

## **2.5 Funding**

### **2.5.1 Funding Cap on PPR Funding Scheme**

Given the keen competition for the limited funds available, each project under the PPR Funding Scheme will normally be granted HK\$1 million or below. Applicants are required to provide strong justifications for any project costing over HK\$1 million.

### **2.5.2 Funding Cap on SPPR Funding Scheme**

A sum ranging from \$3 million to \$5 million will normally be available to each SPPR project.

### **2.5.3 Permissible Items**

Under the policy on the prevention of double benefits, PPR/SPPR grants must **not** be used to remunerate PIs and Co-I(s), or to subsidise their salaries, including honorarium, in any way, if they are receiving any forms of salary/remuneration/honorarium/allowance by public funds.

Funding support may be provided for the remuneration of research support staff who assist in conducting research work and are remunerated with salary. In case where a research supporting staff is employed for several projects, his/her salary should be apportioned accordingly. The policy on the prevention of double benefits also applies to the remuneration of research support staff. The underlying principle is to ensure prudent use of public resources.

Applicants who fail to comply with the rules on the prevention of double benefits will be required to refund the Government the benefits overpaid to them with interest.

PICO agrees in principle to provide, in cases where there is genuine need, funding for relief teachers so as to enable the PI concerned to allocate sufficient time for research. Relief teachers engaged for this purpose are meant to relieve the PIs of their day-to-day teaching loads and administrative burden related to teaching.

Nevertheless, it is the primary responsibility of institutions to make the best use of their resources. Hence, such funding will be provided only exceptionally. PIs have to provide detailed and reasonable justification. For details, please refer to the Guidelines on Disbursement, Accounting and Monitoring Arrangements for the Public Policy Research Funding Scheme & the Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme.

PPR/SPPR grants could be used for covering the overhead expenses relating to a project at a rate up to 15% of the grant.

PPR/SPPR grants could also be used for covering the audit fee for a project, which should not exceed HK\$5,000 for projects under the PPR Funding Scheme and HK\$15,000 for projects under the SPPR Funding Scheme.

PPR/SPPR grants must **not** be used for the procurement of specialised equipment (other than stationery, printing, reference books, etc. that are **not** regarded as equipment). Funding may be used to purchase specialised software licenses (e.g. data analysis software like NVivo), but **not** general software licenses (e.g. Microsoft Windows & Office).

Funding requests for the provision of meals, editing, proofreading and translation of reports/publications and dissemination in journals will **not** be entertained.

#### **2.5.4 *Outsourcing of Research Work***

While any outsourcing or sub-contracting of research work is strictly prohibited, proposals to outsource the work of conducting opinion surveys may be accepted by the Assessment Panel, subject to justifications.

#### **2.5.5 *Data Collection outside Hong Kong***

In principle, PPR/SPPR grants should primarily be used for undertaking research work in Hong Kong. PIs may only use the grant for data collection outside Hong Kong if this is a necessary and justified part of the research. The Assessment Panel (see Section 3 below) will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the merits and justifications provided by PIs.

## **2.6 Submission of Application**

The application form, including the research proposal, must be –

- (a) endorsed by the institution/think tank concerned with signature of the person-in-charge of the organisation and official chop of the organisation; and
- (b) in the specified format and submitted to the Secretariat to PPR Funding Scheme and SPPR Funding Scheme by email ([ppr@pico.gov.hk](mailto:ppr@pico.gov.hk)).

Clarifications or supplementary information from the applicant may be required whenever necessary. Applications will be processed for vetting **only** after the receipt of all relevant information, including submissions of clarifications or supplementary information.

PICO reserves the right not to consider an application on grounds including that the application has been declined previously on the ground of misconduct (common types of research misconduct include but not limited to plagiarism, falsification, fabrication, double-dipping, non-disclosure of similar / related research work in the application, self-plagiarism) by the PPR Funding Scheme, SPPR Funding Scheme or other funding agencies, or that in all the circumstances the granting of funding to the application will be contrary to public interest.

## **2.7 Access to Government Data and Records**

If access to Government or official data and records is critical to the proposed project, the applicant concerned should provide evidence in the application form that the Government department(s) or official agency(ies) has/have been approached for approval of access to the related data/records and subsequently provide confirmation of such approval.

## **2.8 Disclosure of Information**

Withholding or failure to disclose material information relating to the application, including but not limited to the omission of details of other funding previously or currently applied for and/or approved, may result in disqualification of the application, withholding of the release of the approved amount of grant, deduction of the amount of grant, revocation of the funding approval, and/or clawing back of any released fund.

### **3. Assessment Mechanism**

#### **3.1 Assessment Panel**

An independent Assessment Panel set up by PICO will consider all PPR Funding Scheme and SPPR Funding Scheme applications and make recommendations to PICO. The Panel is chaired by and comprises experienced academics. Please refer to Annex III for the composition of the Assessment Panel.

#### **3.2 Peer Review**

Apart from Panel Readers, applications under the PPR Funding Scheme and SPPR Funding Scheme will also be assessed by reviewers who are not members of the Assessment Panel (non-Panel reviewers)<sup>2</sup>. The non-Panel reviewers include both local and non-local experienced academics and experts. To ensure policy relevance of the research proposals, suggestions and views of relevant Government bureaux/departments will also be sought for reference by the Panel. (See also Section 3.4 below.)

#### **3.3 Assessment Criteria**

Research quality and the relevance of the proposal to the needs of Hong Kong are the principal criteria in assessing research proposals.

In considering a research proposal, due consideration will be given to –

- (a) policy relevance on public policy development in Hong Kong, or the extent to which it will foster informed discussion on the relevant policy issues by the local community;
- (b) feasibility and practicality of the proposal;
- (c) the capability of the applicant, including academic qualifications, research records, past research performance, and outcomes of past projects;
- (d) whether the research proposal's schedule of implementation is well-planned and practicable, and the duration is reasonable;
- (e) whether the proposed budget is prudent, realistic and cost-effective, with full justifications provided;

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<sup>2</sup> Each application under the PPR Funding Scheme will be assessed by at least 2 Panel Readers and 1 non-Panel reviewer, whereas each application under the SPPR Funding Scheme will be assessed by the Assessment Panel and each shortlisted application will be assessed by at least 2 Panel Readers and 2 non-Panel reviewers.

- (f) whether the research proposal has alternative sources of funding support; and
- (g) whether there is or likely to be a duplication of the work already or currently carried out by other groups.

### **3.3.1 SPPR Funding Scheme**

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 the **deliverables** of the research (e.g. policy implications and recommendations, monographs, occasional papers, workshop, conference, journal, post-doctorate researchers etc.), the research team's capability, feasibility and practicality of the proposal, the implementation schedule, and the proposed budget. Apart from the above-mentioned assessment criteria, institutional support towards **capacity building** in public policy research (e.g. infrastructure support or matching funds), and any external funding sources and support would also be taken into consideration.

Research teams of shortlisted proposals may be invited for a selection interview, in which the research teams would present their proposal to the Assessment Panel. Government bureaux/departments concerned will also be invited to send representatives to attend the selection interview on the relevant proposals. Government bureau/department representatives are welcome to raise questions to the research teams and offer policy views and insights to the Assessment Panel to enrich the assessment process.

### **3.4 Assessment Process**

Applications will undergo a very rigorous assessment process which involves the Assessment Panel and non-Panel reviewers made up of local and non-local experienced academics and experts. In deciding whether to recommend funding for an application, the Assessment Panel will take into account the comments of individual reviewers and the views of relevant bureaux/departments. The Assessment Panel will take a holistic view on the research proposal and reach a collective decision. Grants are allocated on a competitive basis (the success rate is based on the general quality of the proposals as assessed by the Assessment Panel, and the availability of funds, in a particular year). No appeal will be entertained by the Assessment Panel unless in case of a major procedural flaw. Where appropriate, applicants are encouraged to revise their applications for re-submission.

### **3.5 Avoidance of Conflict of Interest**

To avoid conflict of interest, any member of the Assessment Panel who has any connection with an applicant, such as belonging to the same organisation (in the past or currently), should declare interest at the meeting before joining the discussion. After an interest has been declared, the Chairman of the Assessment Panel shall consider whether an actual or perceived conflict of interest has arisen and accordingly decide whether the member concerned may speak or vote on the matter, remain in the meeting as an observer, withdraw from the meeting altogether, or other appropriate action.

If, for the avoidance of conflict of interest, an applicant wants to exclude a person from reviewing his or her application, the applicant should submit to PICO separately the request in writing, setting out the full circumstances and justification. Such request should not be made under any section of an application which in its entirety will be sent to reviewers for assessment. In all cases, PICO reserves the right of final decision on the selection of reviewers.

## **4. Monitoring and Funding Arrangement**

### **4.1 PPR Funding Scheme**

An Initial Progress Report must be submitted five months after approval of application to demonstrate good progress of the project. 50% of the funding for a project shall be disbursed upon approval of the project and signing of an undertaking and 30% upon acceptance of an Initial Progress Report. The remaining 20% of the funding shall be disbursed upon acceptance of a final report. For PPR project with duration longer than one year, the PI has to submit a Mid-Term Progress Report on/before the date commencing the second half of the project. If considered appropriate by the Assessment Panel, the final payment for a project of which the revised final report is rated “unsatisfactory” may not be disbursed or disbursed in full.

### **4.2 SPPR Funding Scheme**

Half-yearly Progress Report should be submitted once every six months to demonstrate good progress of the SPPR project. If the remaining period before the scheduled completed date is less than six months, there is no need to submit a Half-yearly Progress Report for that period.

Funding granted under the SPPR Funding Scheme will be released in four tranches. 40% of the funding for a project shall be disbursed upon approval of the project and signing of an undertaking. 30% of the funding shall be disbursed

upon acceptance of the first Deliverable Progress Report<sup>3</sup>. 20% of the funding shall be disbursed upon acceptance of the second Deliverable Progress Report<sup>4</sup>. The remaining balance of 10% of the funding shall be release upon acceptance of a final report. If considered appropriate by the Assessment Panel, the final payment for a project of which the revised final report is rated “unsatisfactory” may not be disbursed or disbursed in full.

### 4.3 PPR and SPPR Funding Schemes

Ongoing projects will be monitored by PICO. All completed projects will be reviewed by the Assessment Panel, which will assess the effectiveness of the project by comparing the project results against its original objectives and targets as set out in the project proposal.

PIs have to submit (a) one soft copy (in both word and pdf formats); (b) two colour-printed and bound hard copies of the final report (with (i) title of project, (ii) abstract of research, and (iii) layman summary on policy implications and recommendations in both English and Chinese languages) by the project completion date; and (c) a Completion Report with any empirical data (in both word/excel and pdf formats and with personal data erased to avoid disclosure of individuals’ identities<sup>5</sup>) generated from the research accompanied by an auditor’s report<sup>6</sup> within six months after the project completion date.

For empirical data generated from the research as mentioned in (c) above, PIs are strongly encouraged to provide datasets, if any, in machine-readable format, for example a file format of comma-separated values (CSV) in addition to word/excel and pdf formats for uploading<sup>7</sup> onto the Public Sector Information (PSI) Portal (data.gov.hk<sup>8</sup>).

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<sup>3</sup> The first deliverable progress report should be submitted by the end of one-third of the project duration.

<sup>4</sup> The second deliverable progress report should be submitted one year before the target project completion date.

<sup>5</sup> Data that contain any personal information or any information that may lead to the identification of a person either directly, or by aggregation, rearrangement and matching should not be released to the public. Please refer to the information as published by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data on the details (<https://www.pcpd.org.hk/index.html>).

<sup>6</sup> The auditor’s report should be prepared by an independent certified public accountant declaring that all expenses incurred fall within the approved scope and are in line with this Guidance Notes and the Guidelines on Disbursement, Accounting and Monitoring Arrangements for the PPR Funding Scheme and the SPPR Funding Scheme stipulated by PICO.

<sup>7</sup> Please also refer to the last paragraph of section 6 of this Guidance Notes.

<sup>8</sup> The Government has launched the DATA.GOV.HK portal which aims for bureaux and departments and public/private organisations to disseminate various types of PSI in machine-readable formats for free commercial and non-commercial use. The PSI portal facilitates wider dissemination and re-use of PSI which is highly conducive to Hong Kong’s development as a knowledge-based economy.

Timely submission of reports is important and reflects on the diligence and ability of the PI in managing a project. If an extension of the submission deadline is required, prior written approval should be obtained from PICO. An extension of three months may be granted in justifiable cases. Further extension may be granted only under exceptional circumstances and with strong justifications.

If reports remain overdue without justifications, PICO will consider terminating the projects and rating them as “unsatisfactory” for record. All records of funded projects rated “unsatisfactory”, regardless of whether they are for overdue or other reasons, may be taken into account when any new application from the PI is considered.

If projects are not carried out in accordance with the approved work plan (or the revised work plan as subsequently approved by PICO), implementation date and period, this Guidance Notes, the Guidelines on Disbursement, Accounting and Monitoring Arrangements for the PPR Funding Scheme and the SPPR Funding Scheme, and terms and conditions specified by PICO, if the PI fails to seek PICO’s prior approval for any major changes, or if any of the research activities or the research report may constitute a breach of any laws applicable to Hong Kong from time to time, PICO reserves the right to withhold the release of the approved fund, deduct the amount of grant, revoke the funding approval, terminate with retrospective effect from the date of PI’s departure (for change of PI) or the original project completion date (for project extension), claw back the released fund, remove the project from the list of granted projects and take other actions as appropriate.

The above cases may also be brought to the Assessment Panel for consideration whether the non-compliance should be taken into account as part of the PI’s track record in assessment of future applications; whether the PI should be debarred from making applications under the PPR Funding Scheme and SPPR Funding Scheme for up to three years; and/or whether a financial penalty should be imposed.

#### **4.4 Public Dissemination of Final Reports**

Final reports which are rated “satisfactory” by the Assessment Panel will be uploaded onto PICO’s website for public reference. For reports which are rated “unsatisfactory”, the relevant PIs will be required to revise and re-submit the final reports within two months for the Assessment Panel’s re-consideration. If a revised final report is rated “satisfactory”, it will be uploaded onto PICO’s website. However, if a revised final report remains “unsatisfactory”, neither the report nor its abstract will be uploaded onto PICO’s website. Instead, a remark stating that “*the Assessment Panel decided that this report has not been completed according to requirements*” would appear next to the relevant project title on PICO’s website.

The relevant case will be brought to the attention of the President of the institution/head of the think tank concerned. The Assessment Panel will take into account the PI's record of producing an "unsatisfactory" final report when considering future applications from the PI. The Assessment Panel may also decide to debar the PI from applying for funding for up to three years if so warranted. If considered appropriate by the Assessment Panel, the final payment for such projects may not be disbursed or disbursed in full as an additional penalty.

## **5. Presentation of Results**

PIs will be invited to present research findings to the Government as appropriate.

## **6. Intellectual Property Rights and Use of Project Data**

All PIs and Co-I(s) shall grant for the benefits of the Government, its authorised users, assigns and successors-in-title an irrevocable, non-exclusive, perpetual, transferrable, sub-licensable, royalty-free and worldwide licence to use the Results. Such licence to use shall include the right to (a) copy the Results in any format and in any medium (b) upload the Results including the final report of the research onto PICO's website and make available copies thereof to the public; (c) issue copies of the Results to the public including publishing the Results or any part thereof in reports, publications and/or publicity materials; (d) circulate the Results to bureaux and departments of the Government and other statutory bodies for reference; (e) playing and showing the Results or any part thereof in the public; and (f) making an adaptation of the Results or any part thereof. In relation to any part of the Results to which PIs and Co-I(s) are not empowered to grant the licence aforesaid, PIs and Co-I(s) undertake to procure at their sole costs and expenses the grant of such rights for the benefits of the Government, its authorised users, assigns and successors-in-title by the relevant third party Intellectual Property Rights owners. In all instances, the copyright of PIs and Co-I(s) will be duly acknowledged.

PIs and Co-I(s) warrant to the Government that -

- (i) the provision of the Results in performing the research project, the use or possession by the Government, its authorised users, assigns and successors-in-title of the Results or any part thereof for any of the purposes contemplated by the application form/Guidance Notes does not and will not infringe any Intellectual Property Rights and any other rights of any persons.
- (ii) in respect of any materials used by PIs and Co-I(s) in the performance of the research project and in respect of which any Intellectual Property

Rights are vested in a third party, PIs and Co-I(s) shall have obtained the grant of all necessary clearances for themselves and their authorised users, and the Government, its authorised users, assigns and successors-in-title authorising the use of such materials for any of the purposes contemplated by the application form/Guidance Notes.

“Intellectual Property Rights” means patents, trade marks, service marks, trade names, design rights, copyright, domain names, database rights, rights in know-how, new inventions, designs or processes and other intellectual property rights whether now known or created in future (of whatever nature and wherever arising) and in each case whether registered or unregistered and including applications for the grant of any such rights.

“Results” means any output arising from applications approved under this Scheme including articles, papers, presentations, summaries, publications, statistics, videos and reports.

Five years after completion of the research project, the empirical data generated from the research would be uploaded onto PICO’s website for data archiving. Users of the data sets archived will be required to acknowledge the research team and PICO. Such sharing of project data among the public policy community would facilitate the development of evidence-based public policy research in Hong Kong. Empirical datasets provided in CSV format will also be uploaded onto DATA.GOV.HK five years after completion of the research project.

## **7. Use and Handling of Personal Data**

Details on the use and handling of personal data are set out in [Annex IV](#).

**Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office  
September 2021**

**Public Policy Research Funding Scheme  
Indicative Research Areas**

**Co-operation with the Mainland**

**Code**

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|-----------|--|-----------|
| <b>1.</b> | <b>Harnessing the Opportunities and Meeting the Challenges Arising from the Implementation of the National Five-Year Plan</b>  | <b>C1</b> |
| 1a.       | <i>Complementing the National “Dual Circulation” Strategy</i>  |           |
| 1b.       | <i>Advancement of Hong Kong’s Comparative Strengths: international financial, transportation and trade centres, and centre for international legal and dispute resolution services</i>             |           |
| 1c.       | <i>Creating New Edge for Hong Kong: international innovation and technology hub, international aviation hub, centre for international cultural exchange, and intellectual property trading hub</i> |           |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA)</b>  | <b>C2</b> |
| 2a.       | <i>Hong Kong Linking Up the GBA and the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)</i>   |           |
| 2b.       | <i>Co-operation with GBA Airports and/or Cities to Entrench Hong Kong’s Leading Position in Air Cargo</i>  |           |
| 2c.       | <i>Hong Kong’s Roles and Contributions to Make the GBA a World-leading Innovation Hub in China</i>   |           |
| 2d.       | <i>Connectivity and Flow of People, Goods, Capital and Information in the GBA</i>  |           |
| 2e.       | <i>Studying, Working and Living in the GBA</i>   |           |
| 2f.       | <i>Hong Kong – Macao collaboration</i>   |           |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Belt and Road Initiative</b>  | <b>C3</b> |

**Land and Housing**

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|-----------|---|-----------|
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Land and Housing Supply</b>  | <b>C4</b> |
| 4a.       | <i>Supply of Housing Land and Residential Premises</i>  |           |
| 4b.       | <i>Optimal Utilisation of Agricultural Land in the New Territories</i>                                      |           |
| 4c.       | <i>Feasible Proposal on Tackling Partitioned Room/Subdivided Unit Problem by Using Transitional Housing</i> |           |
| 4d.       | <i>Balance between Land Development and Conservation</i>  |           |
| 4e.       | <i>Expediting Development Process to Quicken Housing Delivery</i>   |           |
| 4f.       | <i>Tackling Ageing Buildings and Facilitating Urban Transformation</i>                                      |           |

- 4g. *Increasing Land Supply to Meet Future Economic Growth and/or Social Needs*
- 4h. *Balance between Liveability and Housing Production in Town Planning and Management*

## **Economic Development**

### **5. Regional Co-operation and Development C5**

- 5a. *Opportunities for Hong Kong under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership*
- 5b. *Economic Relationship and Prospects between Hong Kong and ASEAN Countries*

### **6. Diversification of Hong Kong's Economic Base C6**

- 6a. *Recycling Industry*
- 6b. *Re-industrialisation*
- 6c. *Innovation and Technology Development*
- 6d. *Creative Industries*

### **7. City Branding C7**

- 7a. *Promoting Hong Kong and Rebuilding Local and Overseas Confidence*
- 7b. *Arts and Culture, Sports and Major Events*
- 7c. *Domestic and International Tourism*
- 7d. *Heritage Conservation*

## **Livelihood Issues**

### **8. Poverty and Inequality C8**

- 8a. *Strategies to Tackle Poverty and Inequality*
- 8b. *Social Mobility and Inter-generational Poverty*
- 8c. *Inequalities Among New Immigrants/Ethnic Minorities*

### **9. Ageing Population C9**

- 9a. *Old-age Income Security*
- 9b. *Economic and Social Participation of Elderly People*
- 9c. *Promoting Intergenerational Support and Solidarity*
- 9d. *Ageing in Place: Policies and Practices*
- 9e. *Dying in Place: Policies and Practices*
- 9f. *Building Age-friendly Living Environments*

9g.	<i>Silver-hair Market</i>	
9h.	<i>Active and Healthy Aging Policies</i>	
9i.	<i>Green Burial</i>	
9j.	<i>Family Carers</i>	
9k.	<i>Portability of Social Welfare Benefits</i>	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Labour and Employment</b>	<b>C10</b>
10a.	<i>Statutory Minimum Wage</i>	
10b.	<i>Female Participation in the Workforce</i>	
10c.	<i>Elderly Participation in the Workforce</i>	
10d.	<i>Retirement Protection and Progressive Retirement Practices</i>	
10e.	<i>Skills for the Future and Local Workforce Transformation</i>	
10f.	<i>Occupational Safety and Health</i>	
10g.	<i>Conditions of Work (Remote Working and Flexible Working Arrangements, etc.)</i>	
10h.	<i>Immigration and Emigration: Nature, Impacts, Problems to Individuals, Families and Society; and Prospects of Talents and Professionals Attraction and Retention</i>	
10i.	<i>Long-term Unemployment and Underemployment</i>	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Family Policies and Children’s Welfare</b>	<b>C11</b>
11a.	<i>Fostering a Supportive Environment for Forming and Raising Families (e.g. access to affordable and quality childcare, family-friendly employment practices, gender equality in families, etc.)</i>	
11b.	<i>Impact of Housing, Childcare Services, Long Working Hours and Other Factors on Fertility Rate</i>	
11c.	<i>Family and Family Related Issues</i>	
11d.	<i>Children’s Rights, Wellbeing and Child Protection</i>	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Building an Inclusive Society</b>	<b>C12</b>
12a.	<i>Social Inclusion of New Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities</i>	
12b.	<i>People with Disabilities</i>	
12c.	<i>Students with Special Education Needs</i>	
<b>13.</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>C13</b>
13a.	<i>Long Term Care Financing</i>	
13b.	<i>Primary Care and Services</i>	

- 13c. *Medical-Social Collaboration*
  - 13d. *Biotechnology Development and Bioethics*
  - 13e. *Public Support and Participation for Control of Communicable Diseases*
  - 13f. *Telehealth and Telemedicine*
  - 13g. *Post-COVID 19 Pandemic Era*
- 14. Transport C14**

**Innovation and Technology**

- 15. Information and Technology in Education C15**
- 15a. *E-learning under the New Normal*
  - 15b. *Applying Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education*

- 16. Technology, Innovation and Creativity C16**
- 16a. *Policies to Support Digital Transformation: Digital Currency, Robotics Process Automation, Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence, etc.*
  - 16b. *Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG)*
  - 16c. *Entrepreneurship and Innovation*
  - 16d. *Supporting Emerging Industries: Policies Change and Evolution*

- 17. Technology in Transport C17**
- 17a. *Application of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) in Tackling Traffic and Transport Problems in Urban Areas*
  - 17b. *Application of ICT in Enhancing Connectivity and Walkability in Urban Areas*

**Education and Youth Development**

- 18. Education C18**
- 18a. *National Education*
  - 18b. *STEM Education*
  - 18c. *Media Literacy Education*

- 19. Youth Development C19**
- 19a. *Effective Youth Development Programme and Evaluation*
  - 19b. *Building Multiple Education and Employment Pathways*
  - 19c. *Youth Entrepreneurship*

19d. *Youth Engagement in Community and Public Affairs*

**Environmental Protection**

**20. Air Quality** **C20**

20a. *Air Quality Monitoring*

20b. *New Energy Vehicles*

**21. Waste Management** **C21**

**22. Green Building** **C22**

**23. Ecological Conservation** **C23**

**24. Water Quality** **C24**

**25. Climate Change and Energy** **C25**

**26. Sustainable Consumption and Green Living** **C26**

**Political Development and Governance**

**27. Governance, Administration and Public Engagement** **C27**

**28. Social Media in Governance** **C28**

**Others** **C29**

**Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme  
Strategic Themes (2021-22)**

		<b><u>Code</u></b>
1.	Development Opportunities from the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area under the National 14th Five-Year Plan	<b>SF01</b>
2.	“Dual Circulation” and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership in Synergy with the Belt and Road Initiative	<b>SF02</b>
3.	Belt and Road Initiative: Economic and Trade Co-operation Zones	<b>SF03</b>
4.	Big Data / Smart City	<b>SF04</b>
5.	Innovation and Technology / Artificial Intelligence / Re-Industrialisation	<b>SF05</b>
6.	Alternative Procurement Models for Major Infrastructure Projects	<b>SF06</b>
7.	Developing Green Finance in Hong Kong	<b>SF07</b>
8.	Consolidating Hong Kong’s Position as an International Logistics Hub	<b>SF08</b>
9.	Transitional Housing	<b>SF09</b>
10.	Children, Youth and Family Development	<b>SF10</b>
11.	Ageing Population	<b>SF11</b>
12.	Healthcare Innovations in the Post-COVID 19 Pandemic Era	<b>SF12</b>
13.	Manpower Supply and Development	<b>SF13</b>
14.	Waste Management in the Post-COVID 19 Pandemic Era	<b>SF14</b>

**Development Opportunities from the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) under the National 14th Five-Year Plan**

***Indicative research area:***

Brief background on the GBA development and the HKSARG's policy on the GBA:

The GBA includes nine municipalities in Guangdong, as well as the two Special Administrative Regions (SAR) of Hong Kong and Macao. The development of the GBA is a key national development strategy in the country's reform and opening up in the new era. Its objectives are to further deepen cooperation amongst Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, and to promote coordinated regional development to achieve "win-win" outcome for all.

An "Outline Development Plan for the Development of the GBA" (ODP) was promulgated in February of 2019 setting out the key guiding principles and policy directions for the all-round development of the GBA up to 2035. Hong Kong is named in the ODP as one of the four "core cities" to drive the coordinated regional development in the GBA. In March 2021, the National People's Congress approved the "Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035" (the 14th Five-Year Plan), which is the blueprint and action agenda for the social and economic development of the country in the next five years. In this blueprint, Hong Kong's competitive strengths as international financial, transportation and trade centres as well as a centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region have continued to be recognised for advancement, while new impetus has been awarded to, namely, an international innovation and technology hub, an international aviation hub, an East meets West centre for international cultural exchange and an intellectual property trading hub. On high-quality GBA development, one of the objectives is to establish a brand of quality exchanges among the young people of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao.

Area(s) of importance/interest which the Government would like researches be conducted:

Against the above backdrop, it would be of interest to the HKSAR Government, as well as various sectors of the Hong Kong community, if research could be conducted in the following areas :

1. 14th Five-Year Plan and the related strategic development plans of the nine Guangdong municipalities within the GBA :

Research should focus on the development plan of several (or all) individual Mainland cities of the GBA, while opportunities in specific economic sectors could be examined especially where the relevant municipality has unique potential for significant development in the 14th Five-Year Plan period and beyond, and in which Hong Kong businesses have expertise to offer, leading to sustainable and economically viable partnerships with win-win results for relevant parties.

2. Hong Kong as an intellectual property (IP) trading hub :

This is the first time the Mainland authorities have rendered support for Hong Kong to be developed into an IP trading hub in the national development blueprint. It would be useful to review Hong Kong's strengths in the IP regime, identify how we can contribute to the

national development and map out the strategies in areas including talent recruitment and capacity building to establish Hong Kong's leading position.

3. Possible areas of Hong Kong's contributions towards the promotion of vibrant cultural development in the GBA, hence also enabling various sectors of the cultural and creative industries of Hong Kong to seize opportunities arising from this development :

Chapter 8.2 of the ODP calls for "Jointly Developing a Cultural Bay Area". Specific hardware (Hong Kong Palace Museum, Xiqu Centre, etc.) and software (HK International Film & TV Market, HK Book Fair, etc.) items in Hong Kong have been highlighted. The National 14th Five-Year Plan raises the support for Hong Kong to develop into a hub of arts and cultural exchanges between China and the rest of the world. In-depth study on the potential of the Hong Kong cultural and creative industries in the context of the GBA development, identification of the expertise that they can contribute, as well as areas and ways in which they may collaborate with partners in other GBA cities could provide useful reference for the stakeholders in leveraging the enormous opportunities of GBA development.

4. Opportunities for Hong Kong young people in the context of the GBA development :

Various policies and support measures have been rolled out by the HKSAR Government as well as the Mainland authorities to help Hong Kong young people understand and seize the opportunities of GBA development. The focus of such policies/measures have also expanded from opportunities for further study and start-ups to employment in private and more recently public institutions in the Mainland cities of the GBA. Research on the medium term effect of such measures, such as through longitudinal studies over a 3-to-5-year period, could provide a comprehensive picture that could help policy makers identify gaps (if any) and corresponding enhancement measures for young people better understand what is available to them.

## **“Dual Circulation” and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership in Synergy with the Belt and Road Initiative**

### ***Indicative research area:***

The “Outline of the 14<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives through the Year 2035” mentions the establishment of a new development strategy featuring “dual circulation” (「雙循環」). It supports Hong Kong to continue to foster co-operation and exchanges with countries and regions around the world and fully utilising its unique status and advantages. In addition to the above new national development, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) signed by a total of 15 economies (including China) in November 2020 is an important milestone for economic integration in the region. The HKSAR Government is seeking early accession to the RCEP.

It will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on how best to support Hong Kong’s businesses and professional services to benefit from the new opportunities arising from the above developments in synergy with the Belt and Road (B&R) Initiative. Possible areas of research include -

- Implications of the “dual circulation” strategy and the RCEP on Hong Kong’s future participation in the B&R Initiative; and how Hong Kong, as the prime platform and a key link for the Initiative, may make the best use of its competitive advantages and play the dual role as a “participant” in domestic circulation and a “facilitator” in international circulation;
- New opportunities and challenges brought about by the “dual circulation” strategy and the RCEP; and how they may affect specific industries / sectors in Hong Kong and their access to potential B&R markets;
- Possible forms / areas of co-operation with Mainland enterprises that Hong Kong’s businesses and professional services may foster for jointly exploring B&R markets and opportunities under the backdrop of the “dual circulation” strategy and the RCEP, as well as the supporting government policies required; and
- Recommendations on suggested way forward and specific actions for Hong Kong’s businesses and professionals looking to capitalise on new opportunities for business development arising from the “dual circulation” strategy and the RCEP.

## Belt and Road Initiative: Economic and Trade Co-operation Zones

### *Indicative research area:*

Setting up production line(s) in the Mainland's overseas Economic and Trade Co-operation Zones (ETCZs) (經貿合作區) is a viable option for Hong Kong enterprises that plan to begin production abroad. They have become the springboard for Chinese and Hong Kong enterprises "going global" for direct foreign investment under the Belt and Road Initiative (B&RI). The ETCZs are being developed with different foci, such as processing and manufacturing, resources utilisation, agricultural industry, trade logistics and scientific development, etc. They are invested, developed and managed by Chinese enterprises, operation of which is generally based on market principles.

To fully utilise Hong Kong's distinct role and strengths in advancing the B&RI, the HKSAR Government entered into the "Arrangement between the National Development and Reform Commission and HKSAR Government for Advancing Hong Kong's Full Participation in and Contribution to the Belt and Road Initiative" ("the Arrangement") with the Central authorities in December 2017. The Arrangement serves as a blueprint for Hong Kong's further participation in the B&RI. One of the collaborative measures in the Arrangement is on promoting co-operation between Hong Kong and Mainland enterprises in the development of ETCZs/industrial parks, i.e. –

To further encourage Mainland and Hong Kong enterprises and financial institutions participating in and contributing to the B&RI to form strategic partnerships and jointly take part in project investment and development of "industrial parks", thereby reducing the risks to these enterprises in investing in related countries.

The HKSAR Government has been encouraging Hong Kong enterprises to make use of the ETCZs, as mentioned in the 2020 Policy Address, and the Ministry of Commerce will continue to render support. Five ETCZs within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region in Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia and Indonesia have been identified for pilot matching with Hong Kong enterprises. The Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) is also actively exploring with the Ministry of Commerce measures to assist Hong Kong enterprises in establishing presence in the ETCZs, including engaging the Economic and Commercial Office of the Chinese Embassy or Consulate-General where the ETCZs are located.

To assist the trade in better understanding the investment policies and business environment of ETCZs, sharing sessions were organised/supported by the Belt and Road Office of the CEDB, such as a sharing session on the investment environment of overseas ETCZs (「與央企共贏『一帶一路』機遇——產業園區投資環境交流會」) on 14 August 2018, and two exchange sessions on B&R trade and investment policies and practices (「『一帶一路』貿易投資政策與實務交流會」) on 12 November 2018 and 21 November 2019 respectively. A webinar titled "Riding Ups and Downs: Hong Kong-Indonesia

Partnership” was held on 18 August 2020 which shared business opportunities of the ETCZs in Indonesia. A series of overseas business missions have been organised as well with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) for Hong Kong business and professional services sectors. In addition, the CEDB supported the HKTDC in launching the Transformation Sandbox Programme in April 2020 to, inter alia, share ETCZs-related information with Hong Kong enterprises and provide assistance to interested entities.

Those ETCZs which may present opportunities to industries / sectors from Hong Kong industries/relevant sectors are initially identified at the attached **list**, including the five ETCZs.

It will be of interest to the Government on how best to promote partnership between enterprises in development of ETCZs (particularly the ones set out at the attached **list**), if research could be conducted on this theme covering one or more of the following areas

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- Facts and fundamentals of those ETCZs set out at the attached **list** (e.g. Central People’s Government/Mainland and local government’s policies; industries they attract; modus operandi (parties involved and their respective rights and responsibilities, financing arrangements, applicable laws, dispute resolution mechanism, etc.); current position and future development; incentives being offered; risk assessment, etc.)<sup>1</sup>;
- Potential ETCZs (in matching with the industry profile and investment interests and needs of Hong Kong enterprises), as well as Hong Kong industries/sectors that would be interested/are in a competitive position to contribute to the ETCZs’ development, or to try out in setting up businesses in the ETCZs (with proposed assessment criteria);
- Possible forms of co-operation/development for Hong Kong enterprises, as well as the supporting policies required (with reference to views/suggestions from some Hong Kong industries/sectors which have participated in the ETCZs’ development, or have tackled challenges when investing in the ETCZs);
- Important stakeholders/parties to engage for forging enterprises partnership with a view to pursuing the third bullet point above; and
- Recommendations on suggested actions and way forward.

<sup>1</sup> When researching or updating information on some of the facts and fundamentals, such as local government’s policies, industries they attract, and key incentives, reference can be made as appropriate to the manufacturing guides issued by the Hong Kong Productivity Council in 2019 on the ten member states of ASEAN, which provided information related to the legal and development environment, taxation, labour, industries encouraged by the local government, etc., and which can be accessed via <https://www.hkpc.org/en/about-us/hkpc-publication/industry-support>.

**ETCZs which may present opportunities to**

**Hong Kong industries/sectors**

1. 中國印尼經貿合作區 \*  
(Kawasan Industri Terpadu Indonesia-China)
2. 柬埔寨西哈努克港經濟特區 \*  
(Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone in Cambodia)
3. 泰中羅勇工業園 \*  
(Thailand-China Luoyong Industrial Park)
4. 越南龍江工業園  
(LongJiang Industrial Park in Vietnam)
5. 埃及蘇伊士經貿合作區  
(China-Egypt TEDA Suez Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone)
6. 尼日利亞萊基自由貿易區  
(Lekki Free Trade Zone in Nigeria)
7. 俄羅斯烏蘇裏斯克經貿合作區  
(Sino-Russian Ussuriysk Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone)
8. 埃塞俄比亞東方工業園  
(Oriental Industrial Park in Ethiopia)
9. 匈牙利中歐商貿物流園  
(Central European Trade and Logistics Cooperation Zone in Hungary)
10. 老撾萬象賽色塔綜合開發區  
(Vientiane Saysettha Development Zone in Laos)
11. 烏茲別克斯坦鵬盛工業園  
(Pengsheng Industrial Park in Uzbekistan)
12. 巴基斯坦瓜達爾港自貿區  
(Gwadar Port Free-Trade Zone in Pakistan)
13. 斯里蘭卡科倫坡港口城  
(Port City Colombo in Sri Lanka)

14. 斯里蘭卡漢班托塔工業園  
(Sri Lanka-China Logistics and Industrial Zone in Hambantota)
15. 塞爾維亞中國工業園  
(Serbia-China Industrial Park)
16. 吉布提國際自貿區  
(Djibouti International Free Trade Zone)
17. 中國建材迪拜物流園  
(Dubai Logistics Park (China National Building Material))
18. 緬甸仰光新城  
(New Yangon City in Myanmar)
19. 孟加拉吉大港中國經濟產業園  
(Chattogram China Economic Industrial Park in Bangladesh)
20. 華夏幸福卡拉旺產業園 \*
21. 馬來西亞—中國關丹產業園 \*

**Note:** The five ETCZs which have been selected as pilot for encouraging Hong Kong enterprises to make use of them in business development are marked with \*.

## Big Data / Smart City

### *Indicative research area:*

Big Data and Smart city are important subjects in both public service delivery and innovation and technology (I&T) development.

With input provided by Government bureaux and departments, the Innovation and Technology Bureau (ITB) published the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong (Blueprint) in December 2017. The Blueprint entails 76 initiatives in six areas: Smart Mobility, Smart Environment, Smart Economy, Smart Living, Smart People and Smart Government. In December 2020, the Government published the second edition of the Blueprint. The Blueprint 2.0 puts forth 130 initiatives which continue to enhance and expand existing city management measures and services. Apart from taking forward these initiatives, Government bureaux and departments are launching new initiatives as and when they are ready. The private sector is also taking active steps to adopt more technology applications in their business and operation.

It will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on this theme covering one or more of the following areas:

- Social and economic impact of smart city solutions and big data applications;
- Hong Kong's priority areas for adopting smart city solutions vis-à-vis local circumstances and culture;
- Privacy issues arising from the collection and use of city data, in particular personal data, in smart city applications and the practical issues encountered in conducting big data analytics in Government and in the commercial sector; and
- Long-term talent development needs in these two areas having regard to Hong Kong's position in the Greater Bay Area development.

## **Innovation and Technology / Artificial Intelligence / Re-Industrialisation**

### ***(i) Indicative research area:***

Whilst Artificial Intelligence (AI) holds great economic and social promises, it poses considerable challenges to the existing economic and social order. In addition to devising digital and/or smart city strategies, it is equally pertinent for the Government to look into an AI strategy.

It will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on this theme covering one or more of the following areas:

- How can Hong Kong leverage the use of AI to address economic and social issues (e.g. education, health care etc.)?
- What is the economic and social impact of AI in Hong Kong in the medium to long run?
- How can policies facilitate the adoption of AI for social issues?
- How can Hong Kong prepare its workforce to fully utilise AI instead of being displaced by AI?
- How can Hong Kong ensure the responsible and ethical development in the use of AI?

***(ii) Indicative research area:***

There has been suggestions that Hong Kong should broaden its economic base through re-industrialisation. It will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on this theme covering one or more of the following areas:

- What should be our targeted industries having regarding to our strength in basic research, our need to move up the value chain and build up an ecosystem for innovation and technology, and other factors?
- What policy measures or financial incentives should be put in place to attract the targeted industries to station their manufacturing operation with a critical mass in Hong Kong?

## Alternative Procurement Models for Major Infrastructure Projects

### *Indicative research area:*

The Government has been investing heavily in infrastructure projects with a view to building a better city and improving quality of life.

Since 1982, most if not all public works projects were funded by the Government under the Capital Works Reserve Fund (CWRF) which is primarily the revenue credited from land premium the Government received.

In the next few years, the annual capital works expenditure is expected to reach \$100 billion on average, and the annual total construction output will increase to around \$300 billion. In particular, the Lantau Tomorrow Vision, railway network expansion and other new area developments, if approved, will account for a significant amount of public works expenditure. To ensure long-term financial sustainability for infrastructure development in Hong Kong, it will be of interest to the Government if research can be conducted on this theme covering some or all of the following areas:

- Research on contemporary procurement and financing mechanisms for infrastructure projects, e.g. Design–Build–Finance–Operate (DBFO), Private Finance Initiative (PFI), Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), etc.;
- Ways to leverage business value, commercial mindset, innovation and digital technology through private investment in public infrastructure projects to improve capital projects delivery and operation performance;
- International benchmarking of the Key Performance Indicators of different project procurement and financing mechanisms; and
- Develop a strategic approach on procuring and financing infrastructure projects for Hong Kong.

## Developing Green Finance in Hong Kong

### *Indicative research area:*

Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area supports Hong Kong to develop into a green finance centre in the Greater Bay Area. Against the backdrop of the Outline Development Plan to pursue “green” development, what role can Hong Kong play in financing and supporting Greater Bay Area’s green development? What policies can facilitate Hong Kong to become a regional green finance hub? What are the strengths and gaps of Hong Kong as a green finance hub in the Greater Bay Area and regionally/internationally as compared with other financial centres?

It will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on this theme covering one or more of the following areas:

- Policies (e.g. incentives) to support the development of a green finance in the Greater Bay Area and international context;
- Strengths and weaknesses of Hong Kong in becoming a green finance centre;
- Economic and social benefit of Hong Kong becoming a green finance centre; and
- How to leverage existing HKSAR Government’s policy in green finance in furthering the green finance sector in Hong Kong?

## Consolidating Hong Kong's Position as an International Logistics Hub

### *(i) Indicative research area:*

The maritime sector has all along been driving Hong Kong's economic development. It is a major pillar of Hong Kong's trading and logistics industry. We have our advantages, which include a long-established maritime tradition, our geographical location, and the clustering of shipowners, shipping companies and maritime services sectors. Riding on these, the Chief Executive also pointed out in the 2018 Policy Address that Hong Kong must capitalize on our unique strengths and the immense opportunities brought by the Belt and Road Initiative and the Greater Bay Area (GBA) development to develop high value-added maritime services.

It will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on this theme covering one or more of the following areas:

- Mainland development and its impact on and opportunities for Hong Kong's high value-added maritime sectors;
- Strategy for Hong Kong-Mainland collaboration with respect to the sectors concerned; and
- Positioning of Hong Kong Port in view of the keen competition from the neighbouring GBA cities.

***(ii) Indicative research area:***

Airborne logistics in Hong Kong have been faring comparatively well, thanks to the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA), which has been ranked the world's busiest international cargo airport since 1996. In fact, given Hong Kong's strategic location, world-class infrastructure and superb connectivity, it is an ideal location for international enterprises and supply chain giants to set up their regional distribution centres.

From the perspective of economic development, air cargo handled by the airport accounts for less than 2% of Hong Kong's total cargo by weight, but nearly 40% of exports and imports by value. With the continuing development of e-commerce and the anticipated increase in handling capacity of air cargo upon the completion of the third runway system (3RS), Hong Kong has the potential to attract more high-value goods to be shipped through our airport. If supply chain giants choose Hong Kong as their regional distribution centres, it will bring much economic benefits to the city.

That said, the HKSAR Government is aware of the keen competition from neighbouring cities and the shortage of land in Hong Kong. To maintain the competitiveness of the logistics trade, it will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on this theme covering one or more of the following areas:

- Ways, including but not limited to government policies and measures, that could consolidate Hong Kong's position as a regional distribution centre;
- Unique characteristics of Hong Kong's logistics sector (including but not limited to the fact that it is largely a market-driven sector), as well as the comparative edges compared to other neighbouring cities;
- Problems faced, including shortage of land in Hong Kong;
- Ways for the sector to meet the ever-changing e-commerce landscape and consumer behaviour;
- Support measures which can facilitate modern logistics development and promote the role of Hong Kong as a regional distribution centre especially for high-value products e.g. temperature-sensitive goods as well as medical and pharmaceutical products; and
- Possible cooperation areas with GBA cities on logistics development.

## Transitional Housing

### *Indicative research area:*

It will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on the theme of Transitional Housing covering the following areas:

#### **Implementation of Transitional Housing in Queensland of Australia, Vancouver of Canada and Taiwan**

In the fact sheet FS06/18-19 on "Transitional housing in selected places" prepared by the Research Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat for the Panel on Housing Subcommittee to Follow Up Issues Related to Inadequate Housing and Relevant Housing Policies meeting on 19 February 2019, an overview of transitional housing in Queensland of Australia, Vancouver of Canada and Taiwan was provided, which all have concerted efforts in supporting transitional housing projects in recent years. Other than this, the transitional housing of different modes for the young adults in the Netherlands and South London can also be a good reference for the implementation of the transitional housing.

There is relatively little experience in Hong Kong on transitional housing either in private or public sectors, in particular in a sizable scale with government backup. The overseas cases as mentioned above all have various level of government participation/support involved. It would be gainful to tap their experiences in the implementation of transitional housing in the mode of delivery (e.g. modular housing in Vancouver, the Netherlands and South London, and also the sublease rental units from the private market to those in need at a discounted rate in Taiwan), level and form of financial and policy support from the government, tenancy arrangement, social support, the response of communities as well as control on rent for government policy formulation.

#### **Development of Code of Practice for the Design and Construction of Transitional Housing**

There were reports on various difficulties in regulatory and technical aspects in the design and construction of transitional housing in Hong Kong, including compliance with the existing fire services regulations, environmental and building ordinances. The administrative requirements currently in place for new construction project were also found to be very onerous in the context of transitional housing. The current approach to exercise executive power to grant exemption case-by-case may yield inconsistency and also involved very high degree of administrative effort and cost.

Non-government organizations (NGOs) are normally not well versed in construction and property development. It would be beneficial to both the Government and the NGOs aiming to deliver transitional housings to develop a consolidated manual or code of practice for the design and construction of different types of transitional housing having due regard to the nature and scale of the projects (e.g. transitional in nature and normally of 4-storey or less). It would be also beneficial to look into the elements of re-usability in the proposed code of practice since Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) and Design for Manufacture and Assembly (DfMA) are commonly used in transitional housing construction.

## Healthcare Innovations in the Post-COVID 19 Pandemic Era

### *Indicative research area:*

Hong Kong's healthcare system, similar to those in many other developed countries, is facing major challenges brought about by a rapidly ageing population and the associated increasing prevalence of chronic diseases. The Government is determined to step up efforts to promote individual and community involvement, enhance co-ordination among various medical and social sectors, and strengthen district-level primary healthcare services. Pending a major shift to primary healthcare, healthcare has also been identified as a target area by the Government in driving innovation and technology in Hong Kong. The convergence of biotechnology, information technology, engineering and nanotechnology offers more effective means for preventing, diagnosing, treating and monitoring diseases. Successful R&D in biomedical technology would not only raise the healthcare standard in Hong Kong, but also develop related industries and contribute to the wider world.

The high human and economic costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic make it more important than ever to rapidly accelerate and scale healthcare innovations. For example, the benefits of telehealth are more widely recognised when healthcare institutions cannot maintain normal operations owing to disease control concerns. Mobile-enabled technologies have been deployed to monitor quarantined individuals and to trace close contacts. The ability to rapidly expand the capacity to care for COVID-19 patients can only be made possible with innovations in services, processes, and business and delivery models.

It will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on this theme covering one or more of the following areas:

- Innovative healthcare services delivery models, including enhanced medical-social collaboration;
- Sustainable healthcare financing;
- Enhancing development of primary healthcare in Hong Kong; and
- In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, how to make use of health technology/informatics/innovations to improve Hong Kong's preparedness and capacity to respond to infectious disease outbreak, including anti-epidemic measures such as monitoring, contact tracing and quarantine, the ability to meet the surge capacity in laboratory testing, the ability to meet the capacity challenges and provide continuity of care by public hospitals, etc.

## Manpower Supply and Development

### *Indicative research area:*

Tackling Hong Kong's imminent demographic challenges of rapidly ageing population and dwindling workforce is a priority task of the Government. In her 2017 Policy Address, the Chief Executive sets out the strategic direction for Hong Kong to develop a high value-added and more diversified economy, and emphasises that talent is the most important element in driving this development. To meet the evolving needs for our future social and economic developments, both the quantity and quality of our human capital needs be enhanced. Work needs to be done on various fronts to unleash the potential of the local labour force, especially that of women and elder persons, and to import as appropriate the talent and labour in need.

It will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on this theme covering one or more of the following areas:

- Manpower supply - ways to remove barriers and unleash the potential of workforce (e.g. women, elder persons, ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities); and
- Manpower development - How to promote and raise the public awareness/acceptance of vocational and professional education and training.

## Waste Management in the Post-COVID 19 Pandemic Era

### *Indicative research area:*

In her 2020 Policy Address, the Chief Executive mentioned that waste reduction remains a major challenge for Hong Kong. The COVID-19 pandemic has likely exacerbated the issue by altering the dynamics of waste composition and quantity, in particular with respect to biomedical waste, plastic waste and food waste generated. The pandemic has also brought changes to the waste value chain activities, such as the ways to dispose and recycle waste. All these could potentially impose long-term health and environmental implications to our society.

It will be of interest to the Government if research could be conducted on this theme covering one or more of the following areas:

- What are the key challenges brought by the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the waste management strategies and practices in Hong Kong?
- What have different cities done in mitigating the waste management risks associated with COVID-19? Any lessons to learn for Hong Kong?
- To what extent Hong Kong can seize the opportunities in identifying and developing innovative solutions to such waste management challenges? What are the key policy recommendations?

**Public Policy Research Funding Scheme and  
Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme**

**Membership of the Assessment Panel**

**Chairman**

1. Professor SHEK Tan Lei, Daniel (石丹理教授)  
Chair Professor of Applied Social Sciences, Associate Vice President (Undergraduate Programmes), Li and Fung Professor in Service Leadership Education, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University; Advisory Professor, School of Social Development, East China Normal University; Changjiang Scholar (Changjiang Chair Professor)

**Vice-Chairman**

2. Professor LO Hong Kam (羅康錦教授)  
Chair Professor and Head, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Director of GREAT Smart Cities Centre, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

**Members**

3. Professor CHAN Lai Wan, Cecilia (陳麗雲教授)  
Professor Emeritus, Department of Social Work and Social Administration, The University of Hong Kong
4. Professor CHAN Wai Chi, Sally (陳慧慈教授)  
President, Tung Wah College
5. Professor CHAU Kwong Wing (鄒廣榮教授)  
Head and Chair Professor of Real Estate and Construction, Director of the Ronald Coase Centre for Property Rights Research, Department of Real Estate and Construction, The University of Hong Kong
6. Ir Professor CHENG Tai Chiu, Edwin (鄭大昭教授工程師)  
Dean of Faculty of Business, Fung Yiu King - Wing Hang Bank Professor in Business Administration, and Chair Professor of Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
7. Professor CHIEN Wai Tong (錢惠堂教授)  
Director and Professor, The Nethersole School of Nursing, Faculty of Medicine, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

8. Professor CHIU Chi Yue (趙志裕教授)  
Choh-Ming Li Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology, Dean of Social Science, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
9. Professor CHIU Lai Har, Rebecca (趙麗霞教授)  
Honorary Professor of Faculty of Architecture, The University of Hong Kong
10. Professor CHOU Kee Lee (周基利教授)  
Associate Vice President (Research), Offices of the President and Chair Professor of Social Policy, Department of Asian and Policy Studies (APS), The Education University of Hong Kong
11. Professor CHUNG Kim Sau (鍾劍修教授)  
Professor, Department of Economics, Director of Centre for Business Analytics and the Digital Economy, Hong Kong Baptist University
12. Professor HO Sui Chu, Esther (何瑞珠教授)  
Professor, Department of Educational Administration & Policy, Director of Hong Kong Centre for International Student Assessment, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
13. Professor LAM Kwan Sing, Paul (林群聲教授)  
President, Chair Professor of Environmental Chemistry, Hong Kong Metropolitan University
14. Professor LAM Wai Fung, Danny (林維峯教授)  
Professor, Department of Politics and Public Administration, Director, Centre for Civil Society and Governance, The University of Hong Kong
15. Professor LEE Lap Fung, Francis (李立峯教授)  
Director (Professor), School of Journalism and Communication, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
16. Professor LEUNG Koon Shing, Frederick (梁貫成教授)  
Chair Professor and Kintoy Professor in Mathematics Education, Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong
17. Professor LEUNG Siu Fai (梁兆輝教授)  
Professor of Economics, Business School, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
18. Professor LI Che Lan, Linda (李芝蘭教授)  
Professor, Director of Research Centre for Sustainable Hong Kong, Department of Public Policy, City University of Hong Kong

19. Professor NG Yan Yung, Edward (吳恩融教授)  
Yao Ling-Sun Professor of Architecture, School of Architecture, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
20. Professor QIU Dongxiao, Larry (丘東曉教授)  
Head of Department of Economics and Sydney S. W. Leong Chair Professor of Economics, Lingnan University
21. Professor XI Chao (習超教授)  
Associate Dean (Research), Professor, Outstanding Fellow of the Faculty of Law, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
22. Professor YUEN Ming Fai, Matthew (袁銘輝教授)  
Professor Emeritus of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

**Secretary**

Mr Vincent FUNG (馮浩賢先生)  
Deputy Head (3), Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office

*Remark: Members of the Assessment Panel are appointed on an ad personam basis*

**Handling of Information and Personal Data Contained in  
Public Policy Research Funding Scheme &  
Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme Application**

**Purpose of Collection of Data**

1. Information and personal data contained in your application will be used by the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO) for the following purposes:
  - (a) processing of application, including but not limited to determination of your eligibility, verification of information provided in the application, avoidance of duplicate funding, identification of non-Panel reviewers; and other purposes related to the application ;
  - (b) assessment of the merits of the research proposal which you have submitted for funding support; and
  - (c) administration of the funding schemes, including but not limited to compilation of periodic reports and statistical returns for analysis and research in relation to the use of public funds, project monitoring, promotion, publicity and dissemination.
2. The provision of information and personal data in the application is voluntary. However, failure to provide sufficient and correct information and personal data as required in the application form and in accordance with the Guidance Notes of the Public Policy Research Funding Scheme and Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme may result in the application not being processed.

**Transfer and/or Disclosure of Data**

3. Information and personal data in your application, or copies of which, will be transferred and/or disclosed to the Assessment Panel, non-Panel reviewers, government bureaux/departments, research funding agencies and parties relevant and necessary for the purposes as stated in paragraph 1 above; and may also be published on PICO's website and DATA.GOV.HK as appropriate.

**Handling of Your Information and Data**

4. Your research proposal including your personal data (e.g. CVs) will be handled with care by PICO. Staff of PICO, members of the Assessment Panel, non-Panel reviewers, and other parties who may be involved in the processes described in Paragraph 1 above will be allowed access to the data on a need-to-know basis but they will be placed under a duty of confidentiality to PICO. Information so collected by PICO will not be used for any other purposes. If you

want to exclude any individuals from access to your research proposal, you should inform PICO separately when you submit your application. PICO does not accept research proposals that are classified “confidential” by the Principal Investigators. It also reserves the right to stop processing or reject any applications if the applicants’ requests render it impossible for the applications to be adequately assessed.

5. When PICO obtains non-Panel review on assessment on your research proposal, the reviewers will be made aware of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance in Hong Kong.

#### Physical Retention of Applications

6. Applications that are funded will be retained at PICO for periodic review of progress and final assessment of the research investigation and outcome.

#### Right of Access to Personal Data

7. Notwithstanding the arrangement described above, nothing in this note will affect your legal right to request access to data held by PICO about you or your research proposal and to update or correct such data. Nevertheless, PICO reserves the right to charge a reasonable fee for the processing of any such request(s).

#### Further Information

8. All requests for access to data or correction of your personal data or for information regarding policies and practices and kinds of data held by PICO should be made in writing, by post, email or fax, addressed as follows:

Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office  
26/F Central Government Offices  
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar  
Hong Kong  
Email: [picoenq@pico.gov.hk](mailto:picoenq@pico.gov.hk)  
Fax: 2537 9083