



The University of Toronto - The Chinese University of Hong Kong Research Fund 2025

Guidelines for Applicants

Deadline: 31st March 2025 (10:59 EST / 23:59 HKT)

The University of Toronto (U of T) and The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) continue to develop their strategic partnership and offer opportunities for research collaboration and engagement through a joint call for proposals aligned with their institutional priorities, complementary strengths, and track record of cooperation.

It is hoped that, besides tangible academic outcomes such as the exchange and co-supervision of PhD students and submission of co-authored publications, projects will result in long-lasting, substantial collaborations with a view to enabling principal investigators (PIs) to subsequently apply for external funding to support the next phase of their joint research.

The Fund is open for applications from all research areas and up to 5 proposals will be selected for funding. Proposals demonstrating strong relevance to strategic priorities at the participating institutions and that aim to provide opportunities for collaborative doctoral training and mobility at a future stage are encouraged.

1. Activities and Scope

Proposals may include targeted research support such as joint workshops, researcher exchanges, data collection, research seminars/presentations and the formation or development of a collaborative network. Projects will be funded for a period of 12 months during June 2025–May 2026.

All proposals must be led by the PIs. Mutual external collaborators (including researchers from other universities internationally, or those working in non-academic contexts such as industry or government) cannot lead an application but can be involved in the proposed activities at their own expense, where the benefit of their involvement to the collaboration is justified in the proposal. Doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows, and adjunct faculty may also participate.

2. Costs

The funding provided is intended to support expenses, including but not limited to costs of travel (for PIs, post-doctoral fellows, research associates, graduate researchers) between the institutions, and costs associated with workshops and meetings. Details of eligible and ineligible costs are provided in the table below.

Each partner should pay its own costs and there can be no transfer of funds between the institutions. For example, travel costs for CHUK staff should be in the CUHK budget, costs for subsistence for U of T staff should be allocated in the U of T budget and costs of hosting a workshop in Hong Kong should be costed in the CUHK budget.

Eligible Costs	Ineligible costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel costs including flights, hotels and subsistence • Directly incurred staff, e.g. Research Assistant (eligible to staff who work at CUHK only and not eligible to staff who work at U of T) • Costs associated with organising workshops and meetings (excluding RA/administrative staff) • Research costs, including consumables (up to CAD\$2,200) * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement research/teaching costs • Directly allocated costs including applicants' time • Indirect costs/estates costs • Equipment • Scholarships • Conference attendance • Tuition fees • Honoraria

* The cap is applicable to UofT only.

3. Eligibility

Applicants from all disciplines are welcome to apply. Proposals demonstrating strong relevance to the strategic priorities at both institutions are strongly encouraged (i.e. U of T's [Institutional Strategic Initiatives](#) and [four strategic research areas identified in CUHK 2025](#)) though projects which do not fall within these areas may also be considered.

U of T: Applicants who are faculty members in continuing U of T appointments are eligible to submit proposals. Faculty members in continuing U of T appointments, and students and fellows under their supervision at U of T, are eligible to participate in exchange activities.

CUHK: Faculty members ranked at Research Assistant Professors or above holding full-time employment from all disciplines and at all levels are welcome to apply. Award holders are required to remain in university service for not less than a year upon completion of the activities in the proposal.

4. Equality/Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Adherence to respective Equality/Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policies are an important feature of this program to ensure that all participants can do their best work, thrive and succeed. Applicant teams should consider how they can take meaningful steps in their future collaborations to foster an environment that values, supports and respects a diverse range of views, knowledge and experiences. Applicants should consider EDI as it applies to gender, indigenous peoples, disabilities, career stages, and sectors.

5. Value and Duration

Funding will be provided to support up to 5 proposals for a funding period of 12 months during June 2025–May 2026. Awardees will receive up to the following amount from his/her home institution:

- CAD\$15,000 from U of T to support U of T applicants and
- HK\$85,000 from CUHK to support CUHK applicants

A budget should be provided and expenditure should be made according to the budget plan. Each institution will pay funds directly to its researchers. Approval of expenditure will be governed by each university for the portion of funding provided. Please download the budget template [here](#).

Procurement of goods and services should be adhered to the purchasing guidelines of the respective universities.

CUHK: The costs of accommodation and subsistence are capped at the per diem allowance designated for the city to be visited. The rate of the per diem allowance can be found on the [CUHK Finance Office website](#). Only economy class airfares are supported.

6. Evaluation Criteria

The proposals will be assessed and recommended for selection by a committee composed of members of both institutions appointed by the Associate Vice-President, International Partnership of the Office of the Vice-President International for U of T and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) of CUHK. Each proposal will be assessed according to its academic merit using the following criteria:

- **Project design and rationale (25 points):** How clearly presented and justified is the basis for, and design of, the project? How do the proposed activities assist with establishing new and emerging research collaborations? What are the anticipated benefits of involving ECRs and/or graduate researchers?
- **Collaborator complementarity (25 points):** What is the added value of the new or emerging collaboration? How do the proposed activities combine mutual areas of interest and strength?
- **Potential impact (20 points):** What desired outcomes do the planned activities set out to achieve? What are the anticipated benefits of the activities to local or international communities? How does your proposal demonstrate strong relevance to strategic priorities of the participating institutions?
- **Capacity for future collaboration/funding (30 points):** What is the potential for this project to foster ongoing collaboration, and through what mechanism(s)? How well does the proposed collaboration plan to access external funding?

Preference will also be given to early-career researchers (ECRs).¹

7. How to Apply

¹ U of T's definition on ECRs: An individual who is within five years of their first faculty appointment. This duration excludes any period of career break. CUHK's definition on ECRs: Academic staff members who are Assistant Professors or below.

One joint application per project should be submitted [online](#). Each proposal must include a PI from CUHK and a PI from U of T, and at least one other research staff member on each team (i.e. not PhD student). Eligible applicants may only lead one application as a PI but can be listed as a co-investigator on other applications.

The full proposal is comprised of the following elements:

- 1) **Application Information**
- 2) **Co-Investigator (U of T) information**
- 3) **Co-Investigator (CUHK) information**
- 4) **Research Proposal**
 - i. **Title of Research Project**
 - ii. **Abstract** – a brief description of the project (150 words)
 - iii. **Project timeline and planned activities** (200 words)
 - iv. **Collaborator complementarity** (250 words) – a description of how the proposed activities combine mutual areas of interest and strength and the added value of these combined expertise.
 - v. **Rationale and potential impact** (3 x 250 words)
 - **Potential scholarly impact** – description of the expected academic gains for the project as a result of the proposed cooperation and mobility, and the identification of corresponding performance indicators, e.g. a publication, blog, meeting report, etc.
 - **Potential broader impact** – describe how the proposal aligns with the strategic priorities of the participating institutions and the anticipated benefits of the activities to local or international communities.
 - **Early career and graduate researcher involvement** – any opportunities for their engagement and anticipated benefits to the project and the early career and graduate researchers themselves, as applicable.
 - vi. **Capacity for future collaboration** (250 words) – a description of the potential future collaborations and outcomes that will be possible as a result of having undertaken the current collaboration. For example: joint publications, joint supervision of graduate researchers, joint teaching, joint patent applications, joint reports to governments, joint funding applications, growth of research team size at each partner, collaborations with corporate partners.
 - vii. **Equality/Equity, Diversity and Inclusion** (100 words) – discuss how the proposed project reflects the EDI priorities of the involved institutions.
- 5) **Budget** – a breakdown of the cost of the activity e.g. flights, travel, hotels, etc.
- 6) **Project Team** – a list of the project teams.
- 7) **Supporting documents**

U of T: No additional approvals or MRA are required for U of T applicants.

CUHK: An endorsement form to be completed by the CUHK heads of departments/units and faculty deans/directors of institutes to confirm their (1) support for the application, and (2) intention to renew the applicants' contract if the applicants' existing contract will expire within one year upon completion of the project. To download the form, please click [here](#).

8. Timeline

Call for proposals opens	24th January 2025
Deadline for submission	31st March 2025 (10:59 EST / 23:59 HKT)
Award selection	By April/May 2025
Announcement of results	By May 2025

9. Reporting

All awardees must, as a condition of receiving an award under this call, complete a narrative report (of between 1 and 2 pages) that describes the outcomes, nature of collaboration, project impact, graduate researcher involvement and opportunities for future collaboration that evolved from their project. A single joint report should be submitted to all involved institutions within three months of the project end date, using the contacts listed below.

10. Information about this Call

All queries related to this call for joint research proposals should be directed to:

The University of Toronto

Rikki Zhao, Director, China Partnership

E: rikki.zhao@utoronto.ca

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Ms. Olivia Kwok, Programmer Manager, Office of Academic Links

E: oliviakwok@cuhk.edu.hk

24 January 2025