STANDING COMMITTEE ON LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH (SCOLAR)

SCOLAR LANGUAGE FUND
語常會 語文基金

OPEN CALL FOR
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS 2027-28

BACKGROUND

- The vision of the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR hereafter) is to enable the people of Hong Kong, in particular, students and working adults, to become biliterate (in written Chinese and English) and trilingual (in Cantonese, Putonghua, and spoken English).

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (R&D PROJECTS) 2027-28

Objectives:

- To support the implementation of various initiatives on language learning and teaching in local schools

- To **generate new knowledge** or **fill pedagogical gaps** in the local contexts

TYPE AND MODE OF R&D PROJECTS 2027-28

- Any type and/or mode of **appropriate, innovative research and development projects** that shall be **applied research** with a primary goal of **addressing educational issues of different educational levels**, and **facilitating knowledge transfer between academics, as well as between academics and frontline practitioners**, and thereby enhancing language education and research in Hong Kong

PRIORITY THEMES

All applications MUST be made under one of the following themes.

(a) Chinese or English Language Learning, Teaching and Assessment at Different Educational Stages (from Kindergarten Education onwards)

- *Holistic planning, implementation, and evaluation*
- *Pedagogy for Chinese (including Putonghua) or English to cater for the diverse needs of learners, including learners with special educational needs (SEN)*
- *Assessment of Chinese (including Putonghua) or English language proficiency*
- *Language across the Curriculum (LaC)*
- *Chinese (including Putonghua) or English language development and learning of young children*
- *Language learning needs of students for effective communication across different contexts to facilitate effective language education policy formulation*

PRIORITY THEMES

(b) Learning of Chinese Language of Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) Learners

- *Chinese language and literacy development of NCS learners in early years*
- *Teaching/learning of Chinese language of NCS learners at different stages of schooling*
- *Learning of Chinese language of NCS students in/outside classrooms*

PRIORITY THEMES

(c) Interface Between Key Educational Stages in Chinese or English Language Learning and Teaching

- *Chinese (including Putonghua) or English language learning and teaching across kindergarten education and Key Stage One*
- *Chinese (including Putonghua) or English language learning and teaching across Key Stage One and Key Stage Two*
- *Chinese (including Putonghua) or English language learning and teaching across Key Stage Two and Key Stage Three*
- *Chinese (including Putonghua) or English language learning and teaching across secondary and post-secondary/tertiary education*

PRIORITY THEMES

(d) Use of Technology-Enhanced/AI-Powered Tools to Facilitate Learning, Teaching, and Assessment of Chinese (including Putonghua) or English Language

- *Catering for learner diversity*
- *Facilitating self-directed learning*
- *Promoting assessment literacy, especially assessment as learning practices*
- *Enhancing student motivation*
- *Promoting multimodal and digital literacy*

PRIORITY THEMES

(e) Chinese (including Putonghua) or English Language Use and Proficiency of Working Adults

- *Multimodal literacy in the workplace*

- *Perceived and, where appropriate, tested proficiency across workplace and social contexts*

- *Key challenges working adults encountered when using English and Chinese in both written and spoken modes across different contexts*

- *Language learning needs of working adults for effective communication across different contexts to facilitate effective language education policy formulation*

The themes are by no means mutually exclusive. Interrelated themes will also be considered.

APPLICATION MATTERS

- **Who is eligible to apply?**

  - The **Principal Investigator (PI)** must be an **academic** of a **local registered organisation, statutory body or recognised community organisation, and specialised in teaching and/or research of language/language education**.

- **Is collaborative research allowed?**

  - Collaborative research across local institute(s), with international partnership(s) and/or cross-sector involvement is **strongly encouraged**.

  - **Co-Investigator(s) (Co-I(s))** can either be **local or international academics and/or professionals from different sectors.**

APPLICATION MATTERS

- **How many applications can an applicant submit?**

  ➢ An applicant is allowed to submit **only ONE** application in the capacity of PI.

  ➢ There is no restriction for the PI to be involved in other applications in the capacity of Co-I concurrently.

- **When should the project commence and how long should the project be?**

  ➢ The proposed commencement date of the proposed project shall be between 1 September and 1 November 2027 (both dates inclusive).

  ➢ The duration of the proposed project shall normally last from 12 to 24 months.

APPLICATION MATTERS

- **Can applicants initiate other themes for the proposals?**

  - ➢ All applications must be made under one of the priority themes stated in the *Guide to Applicants*. Interrelated themes will also be considered.

- **Is there a funding cap?**

  - ➢ No upper limit of grant sought is set for each application.

  - ➢ **Grants are allocated on a competitive basis.**

  - ➢ The number of research and development projects to be approved for this call for applications is based on the quality of the proposals, the availability of funds, and any other factors as appropriate.

ALLOWABLE COSTS

■ Some examples of **budget items under allowable costs** are as follows:

➢ Cost of research support staff

➢ Cost of project-related dissemination activities

➢ Conference expenses

➢ General expenses (e.g. travelling expenses of project staff)

➢ Overhead charges

  • This item is for tertiary institutes funded by the University Grants Committee only.

  • For applications with this item in the budget, details, justifications and breakdown are required.

VETTING MECHANISM

Approval by the
Trustee of the Language Fund (LF)

⬆

SCOLAR

⬆

Vetting Committee
(under the advice of Working Group on Language Education Research of SCOLAR)

⬆

External Reviewers

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

1. **Potential benefits to language education in Hong Kong**

2. **Quality of the proposal**

3. **Capability of the applicant and research team**

4. **Implementation plan**

5. **Proposed budget**

LANGUAGE FUND (LF) AGREEMENT

- Upon successful applications, **the LF Agreement has to be signed**.

- Though the **LF grants** are awarded to specific projects in the names of individual PIs, they **are normally allocated to local tertiary institutions, registered organisations, statutory bodies or recognised community organisations**.

- By accepting the approved grant and signing the LF Agreements, **the institutions, organisations or bodies which endorse and support the applications agree to abide by all the relevant guidelines**.

- The organisations, institutions or bodies will become the **Grantees** of the successful applications.

GRANT DISBURSEMENT & BANK ACCOUNT/LEDGER

- Grants are normally distributed **by instalment(s)** to Grantees.

- Grantees of approved projects are required to open and maintain with a licensed bank in Hong Kong **a designated bank account** or to set up **a separate ledger** in the Grantee's finance system designated for the sole purpose of keeping and transacting all monies of the approved grants.

MANAGEMENT OF APPROVED GRANTS

- **Procurement**
  - ➢ The purchase of goods and services must be conducted in an open, fair and competitive manner.

- **Changes of approved projects**
  - ➢ The approved projects must be carried out according to approved proposals as included in the LF Agreements signed.
  - ➢ No changes without the **prior approval of SCOLAR** are allowed.

- **Publications & promotional materials**
  - ➢ All publications and/or promotional materials related to the approved projects shall be sent to the SCOLAR Secretariat in advance for consideration.

THE RIGHT OF SCOLAR

SCOLAR reserves the rights to

- revise or amend at any time the conditions of the grant(s); and

- to suspend or terminate the grants at any time if the Grantees and/or PIs violate the LF Agreements signed.

SUBMISSION OF REPORTS AND DELIVERABLES

- Progress reports and interim financial reports

- An end-of-project report and a final financial report

- An audit report

- **(Tangible) deliverables** that may **enhance frontline practices**, in addition to research findings/outcomes

- **Teacher-friendly pre-recorded videos and articles/insight notes of the findings and project outcomes/deliverables targeting frontline practitioners**

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND THE USE OF PROJECT RESULTS

- All the PIs and Co-Is of approved projects shall grant to the Grantor, its authorised users, assigns and successors-in-title irrevocable, perpetual, worldwide, freely transferrable, sub-licensable, licenses free of royalty, licence fee or other charges to use the results.

- In all instances, the copyright of PIs and Co-Is will be duly acknowledged.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

1. **Download and complete the application forms** (Parts A, B, and C) from SCOLAR's website (http://www.scolar.gov.hk).

   (Reminder: Read the **Guide to Applicants** carefully before completing the application form.)

2. **Submission of soft copies:** Email the completed form (**Parts A and B**) in Microsoft Word 2010 (.docx) format to Language Education and SCOLAR Section at scolar_rd@edb.gov.hk. The subject of the email should be 'Application for Research and Development Projects 2027-28'.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

3. **Submission of hard copies:** Post the hard copy of completed **Parts A, B, and C** (completed Part C must include the signature of the person-in-charge, as well as the official chop of the unit/department/centre of the organisation/body/community organisation) of the application form, together with **all relevant supporting documents** to the postal address below:

> Language Education and SCOLAR Section, Education Bureau
> 5/F, South Tower, Tseung Kwan O Government Offices,
> 30 Tong Yin Street, Tseung Kwan O,
> New Territories, Hong Kong
> [Application for Research and Development Projects 2027-28]

APPLICATION DEADLINE

- **5:00 p.m. on 30 June 2026 (Tuesday)**

Points to note:

- Date of postmark for the hard copy of the application documents must not be later than the closing date and time.

- Late submission or submissions by fax or email will not be considered.

POINTS TO NOTE AFTER SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

- The whole vetting procedures usually take not less than nine months after the application deadline.

- During the period of application, SCOLAR may require the applicants to provide additional information and documents.

- **Failure to provide information required will result in the application being deemed unsuccessful without further notice.**

APPLICATION RESULTS

- Applicants will be informed of the result by email not later than June 2027.

- **SCOLAR's decision is final. The decision and the amount to be granted rest with SCOLAR.**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can PIs of successful applications from previous rounds of R&D Projects apply for R&D Projects 2027-28?

- PIs of successful applications from previous rounds of R&D Projects (i.e. R&D Projects 2015-16, 2018-19, 2021-22 and 2024-25) can apply for R&D Projects 2027-28.

Should the proposals cover both research and development elements?

- The proposals should cover both research and development elements.

What would be the schedule of payment for approved projects?

- Grants for the approved projects are normally disbursed to the Grantees by instalment(s) subject to mutual agreement, having regard to the project duration and circumstances of individual cases.

27

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is outsourcing research and development work allowed for the projects?

- In principle, the grants awarded for the approved projects must be used primarily for undertaking research and development work in Hong Kong, and any outsourcing amounting to the sub-contracting of research and development work of the Project outside Hong Kong shall be strictly prohibited.

- Nevertheless, it would be legitimate for the PIs of approved projects to use the grants awarded for data collection outside Hong Kong if this is a necessary and justified part of the research and development work and with prior approval from SCOLAR. SCOLAR will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the merits and justifications provided by the PIs.

28

FOR FURTHER DETAILS…

- Please visit SCOLAR's website:

https://scolar.gov.hk

FOR ENQUIRIES…

- Please contact the **Language Education and SCOLAR Section**

  Telephone: 3863 1798

  Email: scolar_rd@edb.gov.hk

THANK YOU!

SCOLAR LANGUAGE FUND
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