



**Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association
Scientific Committee on Lung Health**

Funding Application Guidelines

Background and objectives

1. Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association (“the Association”) has set up a Scientific Committee on Lung Health (“the Committee”) on 6th May 2013. The aim is to provide comprehensive and dedicated scientific advice to the Association for future development on tuberculosis, chest and lung health. The involvement of scientific and medical communities in the work of the Association is expected to enhance the contribution of the Association to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis and lung diseases.
2. As one of the objectives of the Committee is to encourage scientific research in tuberculosis and lung health areas in Hong Kong, the Board of the Association has agreed to allocate a provisional annual fund of HK\$500,000.00 for the development of different projects in relation to lung health and related healthcare areas.

Who can apply for the fund?

3. This fund is open to applicants from Hong Kong-based organisations. Organisations may include non-governmental organisations, non-profit making professional organisations, academic institutes, service providers in public sector and government departments (collectively called the “administering institution”). In the initial phase, the duration of which would be further determined, application would only be invited for Members of the Scientific Committee and their Collaborators, for submitting research projects in TB and related areas.
4. The Principal Investigator (PI) will be required to apply for the grant on behalf of the administering institution. An unincorporated organisation or society must be registered under the Societies Ordinance (Cap 151). A school must be registered under the Education Ordinance (Cap 279). A company must be incorporated in Hong Kong.
5. Applications from individuals would not be considered.

Fund details

6. The ceiling amount for each application of a research project is HK\$300,000.00.
7. The application shall be assessed based on scientific merits and the priority of research area.
8. The timeframe for funding application is as follows: -

Timeframe	Application Procedure
Mid of January	Open for application
End of March	Deadline for application
April – July	Assessment and approval
August	Announcement of result

Duration of project

9. Applicants can submit a research project with duration of up to two years. Extension of research project duration will only be considered with justifications and prior approval is required for such request.

Application restriction

10. Applicants administrating institution must be non-profit making in nature. Any income derived from a research project must be used solely to further the objectives of the project.
11. The project grant is given on a one-off basis. The Association reserves the right to consider providing additional funding for completion or renewal of the project or any recurrent consequences/ expenses arising from the project in future.
12. If the project under application is the subject of a separate application for other public or private funding, details such as the names of other funding sources and amounts of grant already awarded or sought from other sources must be indicated. Applicants must avoid double-funding (each item can only be funded by one source), and ensure funding support from other public or private funding bodies does not cover the activities of the project proposal under application. If double-funding occurs, grantees will be required to return part or whole amount of grant to the Association. Co-financing without duplication of funding is allowed. Applicant must state clearly on the application form whether the application

involves co-financing. Applicants must also inform the Association in writing as soon as possible if the project granted involves co-financing after the approval by the Committee. The Association reserves its rights to withdraw or terminate the grant completely or partially.

Processing of applications

13. Applicants must fill in an application form available at the Association website: www.antitb.org.hk. Please submit with the following document hard copies to the Association for application:
 - a. Original copy of application form
 - b. Two copies of project proposal including the following four main areas:
 - Summary of study: background, objective, hypothesis and methodology of the research project. The number of words recommended is 500.
 - Details of resource requirement: research assistant, equipment and other consumable materials, etc.
 - Timeline: duration of the project.
 - Information of the investigators: names, expertise and experience.

Soft copies of application form, project proposal and other supplementary documents should also be emailed in PDF format to the Association: hpc@antitb.org.hk

14. The format of the application form must be closely adhered to. Supplementary information may be submitted but the Committee has no obligations to consider the extra information. The applicant must ensure that information required is fully provided to facilitate timely processing. The Committee may request for other information deemed appropriate from the applicant, which must be submitted before the deadline. The Committee has no duty to remind any applicant of missing information and shall in no circumstances be responsible for any delay in processing and missing of deadlines if the application fails to submit all required information.
15. Applications must reach the Association before the prescribed deadline. Late submission will not be considered. The Association will issue an acknowledgement of receipt to applicants within 14 calendar days from the deadline. Provided that all information has been provided, the Association would normally advise applicants of the outcome of the applications within six months. To facilitate timely disbursement of fund, successful applicants will be notified

first.

16. Upon receiving an application, the Association will conduct an initial screening to ensure that application forms are properly filled in and the proposal is in line with the funding criteria.
17. Application will be passed to an advisor of the Committee for vetting. The advisor will review the application on the basis of its scientific merits and whether it falls into priority areas of the research, and make recommendations and grading of the application to the Assessment Panel of the Committee for decision and approval. The advisor may seek opinions from external reviewers if necessary.
18. The Assessment Panel is responsible for decision making, which comprises Board members of the Association and members of the Committee on rotational basis to avoid conflict of interest. The Assessment Panel will take into account the advisor's recommendations, grading and the Association's missions in making the decision. Please refer to the following flowchart for the processing of applications:

Each advisor handles one project



Advisor assesses the study on the basis of scientific merits of the study and priority areas of the research



Advisor makes recommendations and grading the study
(Grading: Fully support, support with some conditions, not support)



Advisor passes the recommendations with grading to the Assessment Panel



Assessment Panel approves the grants and informs the applicants directly



The Finance Committee and the Board of the Association will be reported in respect of the Committee's decision

Acceptance and Rejection

19. Proposals are either “accepted” or “rejected”. Comments from advisors and Assessment Panel will be conveyed to both successful and unsuccessful applicants. Rejected applications can only be resubmitted in next year round of application with major revision in accordance with comments from advisors and Assessment Panel.
20. Successful applicants are required to sign the “Confirmation of Acceptance of the Grant approved by the Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association” (hereafter referred as “Confirmation of Acceptance”) annexed to an Approval Letter. The Approval Letter, Confirmation of Acceptance, Application Guidelines, the proposal and budget as submitted by the successful applicant, and all requirements, project indicators, directions and orders relating to the project as may from time to time be prescribed or made by the Association in writing, shall constitute the complete terms and conditions of an agreement between the Association and successful applicant in respect of the grant.
21. The "Confirmation of Acceptance" covers matters including, but not limited to obligations of the grantee, payment of the grant, provision of an audited account and an early termination clause. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, no grant shall be made under the Association to a successful applicant, until and unless the “Confirmation of Acceptance” is signed and returned within 14 calendar days of the date of the Approval Letter. In the absence of which the Association will treat as refusal of the applicant to accept the grant and the application will be deemed withdrawn.

Budget items

22. Grants are intended to cover direct costs attributable to the project excluding costs of premises, established academic or service staff, overhead charges levied by the PI’s affiliating institute, and sub-contracting research work without the Assessment Panel approval in writing. In general, indirect costs of projects will not be supported. A list of allowable and unallowable items is shown in **Appendix I**.
23. Applicants are required to provide a full and itemised budget for their proposed projects in the format specified in the “Budget” section. Applicants have to provide appropriate justification.

24. The appropriate salaries for project staff are at **Appendix II** for reference. Applicants must ensure that the budget cost for the personnel are at reasonable market price.
25. Grants cannot be used to create any permanent staff posts or recurrent financial commitments. Any staff engaged in approved projects must be recruited through an open and fair procedure.
26. Grantee must ensure that the purchase of goods and services in relation to their projects is, wherever appropriate, made on a competitive basis by obtaining quotations from more than one supplier and making assessment based on pre-determined criteria of the PI's affiliating institutes (government or other public services and universities), to ensure openness and value for money.

Financial arrangement

27. Approved projects are funded on actual basis with a pre-approved cash ceiling.
28. The Grantee shall not use the grant for any purpose other than the performance of the project and in accordance with the approved budget. Should the applicant expect any income to be generated by the project, this must be stated in the application.
29. Grantee shall ideally to keep a separate interest-bearing Hong Kong Dollar saving or current account with a bank licensed in Hong Kong and use it exclusively for the Association grant. The Grantee shall pay and keep unspent proportion of the grant in the designated project account forthwith upon receipt thereof. The Grantee shall not withdraw any interest accruing to the grant for whatever purpose. The bank interest income earned during the duration of the project has to be returned to the Association and cannot be used for the purposes of the project. Paragraph 11 does not apply to such interest income and cannot be used to offset any deficits exceeding the approved grant. The gross expenditure will be offset by anticipated income derived from the project to arrive at the net grant amount. The Grantee shall deposit receipts of all income derived from the project into the designated bank account. Payments from that account must be made by the authorised representative(s) of the organisation that receives the approved funding.
30. All unspent funds, including all interest accruing from the date of receiving the grant to the closure of the bank account as well as other income where applicable

must be returned to the Association (payable to “The Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association”) within two months from date of completion, earlier termination of the project or upon request by the Association. Any deficits exceeding the approved grant will be borne by the Grantee.

31. The requirement to keep a separate bank account does not apply to government departments, public services (which are statutory bodies) and universities which may deposit the grant into the organisation’s general bank account. In such case, income and expenditure recorded in respect of the project shall be identified and kept separately in a sub-ledger account established for that purpose.
32. Expenses incurred before the commencement date of the project will not be reimbursable from the Association. For avoidance of doubt, no fees, costs, charges or disbursements whatsoever in addition to the grant shall be payable from the Association in respect of the project. Re-allocation of funds among the approved items of expenditure and any modifications of the contents of the approved items (not involving additional funding) of an approved project are not allowed without the prior written approval of the Committee. The Committee reserves the right to modify the amount of the grant in the light of developments or further information, or suspend or terminate funding support at any time if irregularities or contraventions of the terms of the Application Guidelines are detected.
33. Where circumstances justify, the Association may withhold or reclaim any payment from Grantee in accordance with the Grant Agreement.
34. Grantee must agree to comply with the “Confirmation of Acceptance” and undertake to return to the Trustee the full amount of the grant received by the Grantee if in the reasonable opinion of the Association or the Committee, the Grantee is in breach of any one of the terms and conditions stipulated.
35. Grantees must agree that the bank’s acknowledgement of receipt of the grant to the Trustee will be sufficient discharge in lieu of acknowledgement by them, and that the Trustee is not bound to accept any payment request or instructions from the Grantees that are inconsistent with this paragraph.
36. For a project ends within one year, 85% of the grant will be released after the signed “Confirmation of Acceptance” is received by the Association. The Grantee must submit an audited account, auditor’s report and the final report to the

satisfaction of the Committee within three months from the date of completion or earlier termination of project. Afterwards, the remaining 15% of the grant will be released after approval by the Committee.

37. For a project with duration more than one year, 70% of the first year’s grant will be released after the signed “Confirmation of Acceptance” is received by the Association. Depending on the duration of project, grantee must submit an interim report to the satisfaction of the Committee within one month from the completion of the 9th month or 12th month respectively as follows: -

Duration of project	Submission of interim report
13 months – 18 months	The 9 th month
19 months – 24 months	The 12 th month

After the submission of interim report, 30% of the first year’s grant and 70% of the second year’s grant will be released. The Grantee must submit an audited account, auditor’s report and the final report to the satisfaction of the Committee within three months from the date of completion or earlier termination of project. Afterwards, the remaining 30% of the second year’s grant will be released after approval by the Committee.

Accounting Requirement

38. Grantees must maintain proper books, accounts, relevant records and information related to the approved projects. These records must be kept for two years after completion of the project, and be available for inspection by authorized staff of the Association at all reasonable times.
39. Grantees will be required to submit an audited account within three months from date of completion or earlier termination of the project. The audited account shall comprise an Income and Expenditure Account and accompanied by an Auditors’ Report. The period to be covered by the account is from commencement date to completion or earlier termination date of the project.
40. The audited account shall be certified by the officer-in-charge or the applicant of the project and audited by an independent auditor who must be professional accountant registered under Section 22 of the Professional Accountants Ordinance (Cap. 50). The auditor must express opinions as to whether the Grantee has complied with, in all material respects, the requirements set by the Association

(including the requirements to keep proper books and records and to prepare proper income and expenditure account), and all the terms and conditions as specified in the “Confirmation of Acceptance”, the Application Guidelines and the Association’s requirements, project indicators, directions and orders relating to the project prescribed or made in writing during the duration of the project.

41. For universities, government departments and statutory bodies which have internal auditors, the account may be audited, and the required auditor report signed, by their internal auditors.

Performance monitoring and evaluation

42. An applicant must not accept the approved grant if it considers itself incapable of achieving the objectives and indicators.
43. Grantees must ensure that project objectives and indicators are achieved, their obligations are fulfilled and that the grants are used according to the terms and conditions of the “Confirmation of Acceptance”. Failure to uphold such obligations may result in deferral or termination of project funding.
44. An applicant must set out in the application form the monitoring and evaluation plan for achieving the specific objectives of the project. He or she must also specify the method used to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. The focus must be on the process, outcome and impact of the project, and these must be measured quantitatively as far as possible. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain ethical and safety approval from the relevant authorities, if appropriate, before the official start date of the project. Under no circumstance should the timeline of the project be affected by inattention to ethical and safety needs of the project.
45. Visits to projects or their administration may be arranged for members of the Committee or staff of the Association. Members of the Committee, agent and/or staff of the Association may attend or join any activities and events funded by the Association with or without prior notice. Grantees are required to assist in arranging such visits.

Interim and Final Reports

46. Grantees are required to submit the interim and final reports. The submission of

these reports enables the Association to:

- Assess whether the work was carried out in accordance with the approved proposal
- Evaluate the quality of the research
- Maintain a track record of investigators' compliance with the standard conditions of research grants
- Quantify research output

47. All reports must be submitted by the deadlines specified in the "Confirmation of Acceptance". If the reports are not accepted by the Committee, the applicants are obliged to revise them accordingly and submit their revisions in compliance with the feedback of the Committee and before deadlines that are set.
48. Failure to submit these reports, or to revise and resubmit if required, by the specified deadlines will mean that the project is incomplete. It may result in deferral or termination of project funding. The Association has no obligation to remind or advise Grantees about their obligations under the "Confirmation of Acceptance" and should not be held responsible for deferrals or termination of funding that arises.
49. Interim report should be submitted for the purpose of monitoring the progress of the projects, difficulties encountered, identifying areas where the applicants may need support and to monitor the expenditure. Interim reports will be studied by the Committee.
50. An interim report template is available from the Association website: <http://www.antitb.org.hk>. A hard copy of interim report with necessary attachments must be submitted. Soft copy of interim report must be submitted by email in PDF format. Incomplete or insufficiently detailed reports and attachments will be returned for revision and resubmission.
51. A final report must be submitted within three months of the project end date. The number of hard copies of the final report, which should not be bound, with attachments as appropriate, will be advised by the Committee. Soft copies of the reports must be submitted by email in PDF format.
52. The final report should be approximately 10 pages (1.5 lines spacing, font size 12 in Times New Roman) in length, excluding the title page and attachments. It must be concise, self-contained and complete with sufficient information to

evaluate the project. The report should be written in a style suitable for a general as well as an academic readership. Minimum information for the final report should comprise the following:

a. Title Page (Project Title, Reference No., Investigators, Administering Institution, Date of Submission)

b. Summary

- A summary of around 300 words to state the aim/objectives, describe study layout and highlight the main findings and implications.

c. Main Body of the Report

- The main body of the report should be written to include the following:
 - Background and rationale of the research
 - Aims, Objectives and Project indicators
 - Study design (inclusive of methodology, ethical and safety contexts, if appropriate)
 - Administrative progress throughout the project period (timeline, team building, collaborations, presentation of result, delivery of outputs...)
 - Project results (echoing the stated objectives)
 - Discussions (on accomplishments and constraints, implications of the findings, relevance of the study, recommendations on translating results into public health or clinical actions)
 - Conclusions
 - References (limit to no more than 10)

d. Appendices

This section should be composed of:

- Summary of research outputs – a list of presentations made at scientific meetings and manuscripts generated. Abstracts of these works should also be included.
- Financial report, auditors' account
- Other reports for supporting the evaluation of the project

53. The final report will be assessed by the Committee. If the report, or parts of the report, is found to be not acceptable or insufficient, the Committee may request the applicant to make amendments and additions as required, which should be submitted in accordance with the timeline that is set for the purpose.

Modification of project content or approved items

54. Requests for changes in project must be made in writing and submitted to the Association. Such requests for changes may cause delay in grant for which the Association shall not be held responsible. Re-allocation of funds among the approved items of expenditure and any modifications of the contents of the approved items (not involving additional funding) of an approved project are not allowed without the prior written approval of the Association. Unauthorized changes in the project will lead to forfeiture or termination of grants.
55. Applications for supplementary grants or additional funding for a project after the project has been approved by the Committee are not allowed, and will not be considered.
56. The Association reserves the right to modify the amount of the grant in the light of new developments or suspend or terminate funding support at any time if irregularities are detected.

Disclaimer

57. Grantees of supported projects are required to make the following disclaimer on the articles (including webpage content, audio-visual materials, sound recordings, pictures and written materials) developed in the course of the funded project: “This project is sponsored by the Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association (“The Association”). The content of this article represents the opinion of the investigators only and does not represent the position of the Association. The Association is not responsible for any claims, demands or liabilities whatsoever arising from or in connection with the use of any information contained in this article or the participation of the sponsored project.”

Liability of the Association

58. Notwithstanding the provision of the grant by the Association, or the compliance by the Principal applicant and the administering institution with the conditions of such grant the principal applicant and administering institution shall remain solely liable for all costs, liability or damages relating to the research and the publication of such research.

59. Without limiting paragraph 58, the principal applicant and the administering institution shall be solely responsible for claims that the research or a part thereof infringes the intellectual property or other rights of a third party.
60. The status of seeking ethical and safety approval at the time of submission should be documented on the application form. The responsibility for seeking relevant approval rests with the principal applicant. Only applications that have received written clearance from a recognised ethics committee and safety approval from a designated Safety Officer, or equivalent, will be considered for funding.

Acknowledgement and information sharing

61. Grantees must acknowledge the contribution of the Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association in all publicity or published materials associated with the funded project.
62. Grantees are taken as having given consent to the Association to use, reproduce or disseminate information in relation to the funded project without copyright infringement.
63. The Association may attend conferences and seminars irregularly to allow Grantee to share their experience of implementing successful projects and encouraging best practices. Grantee may be required to attend and participate in these conferences and seminars.

Termination

64. Where:
 - a. The Association is reasonably satisfied that any of the terms and conditions of the "Confirmation of Acceptance" has not been complied with by or on behalf of the Grantee;
 - b. The Association, by written notice, has requested the Grantee to take action to achieve the outcomes and outputs specified in the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement and the Grantee has failed to take that action within the time interval required ;

- c. The Association is reasonably satisfied that any statement made in the application form is incorrect or incomplete in a way which would have affected the original decision to approve the Grant.
- d. The Association discovers that the purposes and activities of the Grantee are no longer compatible with the objectives of the project.

the Association may, in its absolute discretion and without prejudice to its accrued rights and actions against the Grantee, by giving 30 days' written notice to the Grantee, terminate the project.

Application and enquiries

65. For application or general enquiries, potential applicant may contact the Association as follows:

Address	Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association 266 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
Contact Tel.:	2572 3466
Fax No.:	2834 0711
Email address:	hpc@antitb.org.hk

Scientific Committee on Lung Health
April 2019