

Announcement of results of Public Policy Research Funding Scheme (special round)

The Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO) announced today (May 7) the results of the applications under the special round of the Public Policy Research (PPR) Funding Scheme.

The special round of the PPR Funding Scheme was launched in November 2019 to fund local research institutions and think tanks to conduct research studies on topics relating to the underlying causes of the social incidents that took place in the second half of 2019 as well as important political, economic, cultural and societal issues relating to deep-seated problems of society. PICO received 210 applications under the special round and, on the advice of the Assessment Panel, supported 79 projects with total funding of about \$31 million.

In line with the standing arrangements for the PPR Funding Scheme, assessment of applications received under the special round was conducted by the independent Assessment Panel, chaired by and comprising experienced academics. The research quality of the proposal and relevance to the themes of the special round were the principal assessment criteria. In addition, the Panel gave due consideration to other related factors, such as whether the research proposal was solution-oriented, feasible and practical; whether the methodology was reasonable and sound; the capability of the applicant; and whether the proposed budget was prudent and cost-effective. The Assessment Panel took a holistic view on each research proposal, reached a collective decision and made recommendations to PICO. A declaration of interest system was also in place to ensure the assessments were fair and impartial.

In general, a sum of up to \$500,000 has been granted to each approved project under the special round. The approved projects have commenced progressively, and all projects are expected to be completed by the end of 2020, with the first batch to be completed in late September/early October 2020.

Details of the funded projects have been uploaded to PICO's website (www.pico.gov.hk/en/PRFS/specialRound.html). Completed research reports which are rated "satisfactory" by the Assessment Panel will be uploaded to PICO's website for public reference in due course.