

Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme 2025-26 opens for applications

The Chief Executive's Policy Unit (CEPU) today (March 5) announced that the Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme (SPPRFS) 2025-26 is open for applications between now and April 23, 2025.

The SPPRFS is aimed at encouraging local think tank experts and scholars (including universities and civil society think tanks) to apply their expertise to conduct evidence-based research on key public policy issues, and to facilitate the knowledge transfer of research findings to policy considerations, serving as a channel for the Government to tap the public policy research expertise of society. In light of the policy priorities of the Government, six strategic themes have been identified for the SPPRFS 2025-26. They are: (a) Development Opportunities from the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area; (b) New Quality Productive Forces; (c) Integrated Development of Education, Technology and Talents; (d) International Financial, Shipping and Trade Centre; (e) Integrated Development of Culture, Sports and Tourism; and (f) Elderly and Healthcare Services.

Applications for the SPPRFS must be made under one of the above specified strategic themes and be in line with the specified research areas. Those falling outside the specified strategic themes and specified research areas will not be considered generally. Each SPPRFS project may be granted a maximum of HK\$5 million and last from one to five years.

Separately, the major themes and indicative research areas of the Public Policy Research Funding Scheme (PPRFS), which is also administered by the CEPU, have been updated having regard to Hong Kong's current and long-term development as well as the need for research on various social issues. While applications for the SPPRFS are accepted at specific times each year, the PPRFS focuses on research studies of shorter duration and smaller scale with applications accepted throughout the year. Applications for the PPRFS will be vetted, and notifications of the results will be issued by batch.

Assessments for the SPPRFS and PPRFS will be conducted by an Assessment Panel, which comprises experienced academics and professional experts. The Assessment Panel will also take into account comments from external reviewers who are experienced academics and professional experts during the assessment process. To ensure the policy relevance of the research proposals, views of relevant government bureaux/departments will also be sought for reference by the Panel. A declaration of interests system is in place to ensure that the assessments are fair and impartial.

Research quality and relevance to public policy needs are the primary

considerations in evaluating research proposals under both Schemes, including the reasonableness of the research proposal, the research team's capability, the cost-effectiveness of the proposed budget, and whether the research findings can be effectively translated into practicable policy recommendations.

For details of the SPPRFS and PPRFS, including eligibility criteria, research areas, assessment mechanism, application method and other related information, please visit the CEPU's website (www.cephu.gov.hk/en/PRFS).