

Notes for applicants

CAS-Croucher Funding Scheme

This scheme is the outcome of an agreement between Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and Croucher Foundation. The purpose of the scheme is to encourage researchers in Hong Kong universities and CAS research institutes to work together on highly specific scientific topics with the intention, in the longer term, to establish a Joint Laboratory through first-hand experiences working together on a joint project. In past years, the scheme was limited to existing Joint Laboratories only.

Principal Investigators successful in obtaining grants in previous years under the CAS-Croucher Funding Scheme may present an application, but only once the previous grant expires.

In the interest of fairness, Principle Investigators are requested to submit one application (only) in a given selection round.

Stage 1 – Preliminary Applications

There are two components for Preliminary Applications. The first is a Project Summary of the scientific project (strictly limited to not more than two pages in English on A-4 papers) which should include the topic and scientific information rationalising the merits of the project, and names, ranks and institutional contact details of Principal Investigators from both sides. Principal Investigators should, on the Hong Kong side, be full-time academic staff of a university in Hong Kong and, on the mainland side, be full time researchers within a CAS institute. The full grant proposal should not be presented at this stage.

Unless applicants have already formed Joint Laboratories formally accredited by the CAS, the Project Summary should be accompanied by an Expression of Interest paper. The Expression of Interest is an important part of the Preliminary Application, enabling assessors to determine whether pre-requisite conditions exist for the potential establishment of a Joint Laboratory as an outcome of the proposed project. The paper should be jointly signed by both Principal Investigators. The Expression of Interest should also be limited to two sides of A4 paper and should include the following, in the order specified, with each item presented in separate lines or paragraphs:

- The full name of the relevant CAS Institute and the name of the department of the relevant university in Hong Kong. Relevant full postal addresses, direct telephone numbers and institutional website access (if available) should also be included;
- The names and titles of the principal scientists intending to form the Joint Laboratory, their position (in the CAS or the university concerned), with telephone numbers and e-mail address, personal websites if applicable; CVs should NOT be presented;
- Scientific background of the two laboratories or teams involved in the project: a statement preferably in less than 200 words describing complementary factors within the relevant unit in the Hong Kong university and the CAS Research Institute which point in the longer term towards the establishment of a Joint Laboratory, and such factors might include facilities, equipment, specific research expertise and/or access to research materials and resources;

- details of any existing joint project, formal activity or programme between the two co-applicants from Hong Kong and CAS.

Applicants are reminded that the Project Summary and Expression of Interest should each be strictly limited to two sides of A4 paper. Additional papers will be automatically eliminated at this stage. Preliminary Applications will be examined by the CAS in consultation with Croucher. Principal Investigators of shortlisted projects will only then be formally invited to submit full grant proposals.

To apply, please enter the online application system [here](#).

Stage 2 – The Full Grant Proposal

The full grant proposal must be presented in both Chinese and English for convenience of peer review in and outside China. All applicants must therefore be fully aware that the proposals will be read by scientists in the same or similar fields. There is no formal application form, but the proposal is expected to cover at least the following aspects:

- A very brief statement of objectives of the study;
- Background of the study and scientific contents;
- The methodology and a research schedule (including starting date and duration). Applicants should note that a number of assessors are not willing to review applications which do not give methodological details.
- If the outcome of the study is expected to be of some applied or industrial significance, please explain;
- Essential bibliography notes (only) relevant to the study;
- A brief curriculum vitae of each of the members of the research group, on no more than one side of A-4 for each, to include mainly: the month and year of birth, nationality, personal webpage if available, brief career history with only full-time appointments (with dates); research grants but only those received in the past three years and presently held (with dates). Full publication lists are not welcomed, but the principal investigators may identify the titles of the FIVE items (only) which they consider to be most important to represent achievements of his/her career.
- Budget Statement in the form shown in the appendix: Itemised breakdown required, e.g. consumables, research personnel, equipment, scientific activities or programs etc., with estimated costs, year by year, at current prices, and tabulated to show the place of expected location of disbursements of each item (i.e. Chinese mainland or Hong Kong). This part must be very clear as it must include all costs including those items and expenses that will eventually be covered by the 20% of the total budget of the project to be contributed by the university and the relevant CAS institute if the application is successful. For practical purposes, applicants may wish to confine their budget total to around HK\$3.75 million [i.e. including HK\$3 million (80%) from the Croucher plus HK\$750,000 (20%) from both institutions.] The budget should show separate figures for salary in respect of each research post, and should identify the standard on which the salary is calculated.

Please send the soft copy of each full grant proposal (PDF files in English and Chinese) to info@croucher.org.hk.

Indication of Intention (if applicable)

Other than those joint laboratories which are already accredited by CAS, each full grant proposal must be accompanied by an Indication of Intention form to be completed by both the Hong Kong university and the CAS

Research Institute to establish, in the longer term a Joint Laboratory approved by CAS. The Indication of Intention form, which must be signed by both Principal Investigators, should be on a separate sheet.

Endorsement by the Heads of Institution

Each proposal should carry an endorsement by an authorised senior officer in the institution concerned (the CAS institute in the case of the mainland partner and the university in the case of the Hong Kong partner) who will be held responsible to commit the institution to relevant financial responsibilities, including the confirmation to make an immediate contribution, upon offer, equivalent to HK\$750,000 of the amount of the grant earmarked for their side of the proposed collaboration.

The applicants may nominate two academic referees for the project if so wished, on the understanding that the selection panel has no obligation to call on the services of the persons so nominated.

The grants for this scheme originate from a private source, and before completion of application formalities, applicants should be prepared to accept that the funder does not offer any critique for proposals whatever the outcome.

Appendix

Sample Format of Budget Statement

Disbursements expected on the Mainland side

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Category A				
Salary Equipment	*****	*****	*****	*****
Total Category A Costs	***	***	***	A
Category B				
Computing Expenses/Travel Subsistence/ Consumables/Other (please specify)	*****	*****	*****	*****
Total Category B Costs	***	***	***	B
Grand Total	***	***	***	A+B

Disbursements expected on the Hong Kong side

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Category A				
Salary/Equipment	*****	*****	*****	*****
Total Category A Costs	***	***	***	A
Category B				
Computing Expenses/Travel Subsistence/ Consumables/Other (please specify)	*****	*****	*****	*****
Total Category B Costs	***	***	***	B

Grand Total	***	***	***	A+B
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Notes

- Please cost the budget in terms of Hong Kong Dollars.
- Details of costs of travel and consumables, if applicable, must be separately explained.
- The budget should show separate figures for salary in respect of each research post, and should identify the standard on which the salary is calculated.
- The year-to-year estimate may be important as grants may be offered in instalments upon annual progress reports to the satisfaction of the CAS and Croucher.

Sample of Indication of Intention

INDICATION OF INTENTION

In presenting our joint research proposal herewith to Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and Croucher Foundation, we understand that if a grant is approved towards the project, we should commit ourselves to developing the prospects of forming a CAS Joint Laboratory, through the interactive experience of relevant researchers in the two departments and/or institutes whose signatures are attached below. We understand the accreditation authority of Joint Laboratories rests with the CAS which has standards and expectations for such Joint Laboratories.

(Signed by

Dept/Institute of

Name of University/CAS)

(Signed by

Dept/Institute of

Name of University/CAS)

Date: _____