

The Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme, 2017-18

Background

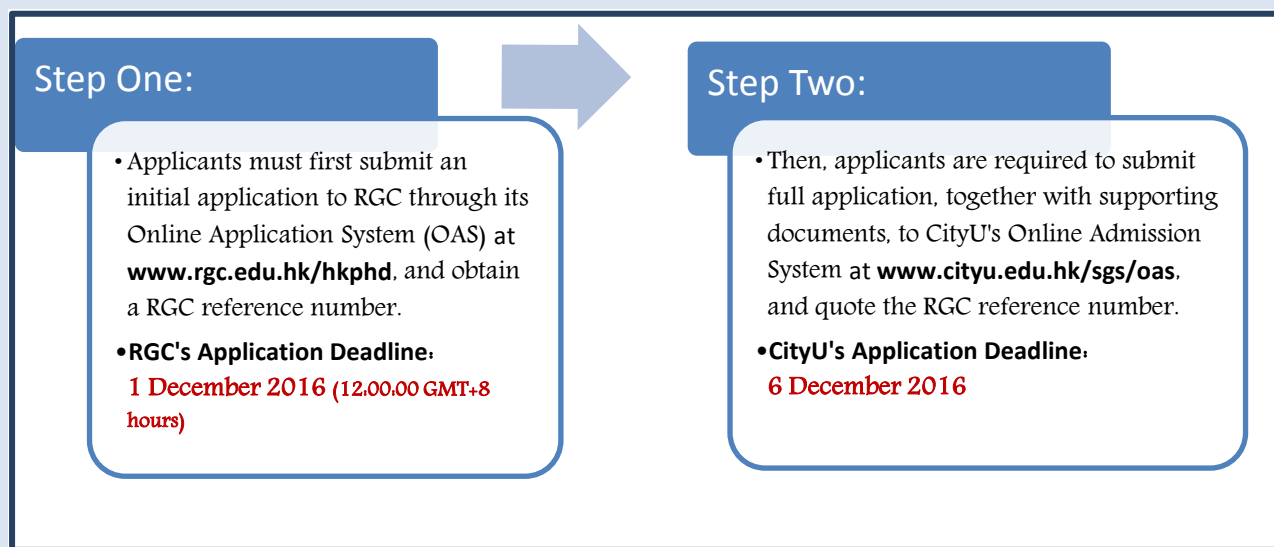
1. Established in 2009 by the Hong Kong Research Grants Council (RGC), the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme aims at attracting the best and brightest students in the world to pursue their PhD programmes in Hong Kong's institutions.

Eligibility

2. Applicants who are seeking admission as new full time PhD students in UGC-funded institutions of Hong Kong, irrespective of their country of origin and ethnic background, should be eligible to apply. Applicants should demonstrate outstanding qualities of academic performance, research ability / potential, communication and interpersonal skills, and leadership abilities.

Application Procedure and Deadlines

3. Applications to the Fellowship Scheme will be invited from 1 September 2016 - 1 December 2016 (by noon). Applicants are required to submit online applications both to the RGC and CityU.



4. Late applications will not be processed. The application procedures and timeline for processing applications for the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme is given in Annex 1.
5. Each applicant may choose up to two programmes in one institution or two programmes in two different institutions for PhD study when applying for the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship at the RGC. This year, RGC allows applicants to make changes to their programme choices on RGC's Initial Application Form by the close of RGC's application deadline.

Fellowship and Award

6. The Fellowship awarded by the RGC provides a monthly stipend of HK\$20,000 (approximately US\$2,600) and a conference and research-related travel allowance of HK\$10,000 (approximately US\$1,300) per year for the awardees for a maximum period of three years.

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7. For Fellowship awardees who are admitted to a 4-year PhD programme, CityU will provide a monthly studentship at the same level as the Fellowship awarded by the RGC for their fourth year of study.
8. In addition, Fellowship recipients at CityU will be awarded *Chow Yei Ching School of Graduate Studies Entrance Scholarship*. The Scholarship, at the value of HK\$71,496 (approximately US\$9,170), covers students' tuition and on-campus hostel accommodation fees in their first year of research studies.

Selection Criteria

9. While the academic excellence is of prime consideration, the Selection Panels will take into account, but is not limited to, the following criteria (with a total weighting of 120 points) for the selection of candidates as follows:

Selection Criteria/Weightings	Reference
Academic Excellence (Weighting = 60 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic record of current/intermediate past affiliated institution(s) • Open test results (widely recognized tests such as GRE subject tests, GMAT, IELTS, TOFEL)
Research Ability and Potential (Weighting = 20 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication(s) (if available) • Recommendation from nominating/affiliated institutions/ and referees. • Interview assessment by nominating institution(s) (via telephone, face-to-face, or other communication means as decided by individual institutions)
Cultural diversity (Weighting = 15 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add diversity to the research student population
Leadership Ability and Societal Responsibility (Weighting = 10 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement in academic/extra curriculum activities and volunteer work • Working experience • Vision Statement • The ability to communicate clearly and logically in written and oral formats (by interview)
Communication and Interpersonal Skills (Weighting = 10 points)	
Institutional Support (Weighting = 5 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convincing and strong justifications given by the institution that meet the objectives of the Scheme backed by solid data

10. Shortlisted candidates will be invited by the applying institutions to admission interview (face-to-face, Internet/Skype, or via telephone). Nominees' performance during the interview would be one of the important parameters in assessing the applicant's research potentials. Detailed and elaborative assessment comments on nominated candidates are highly recommended.

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Selection and Nomination by Institutions

11. When making nominations, institutions are required to classify the candidates into two categories – “Sciences, Medicine, Engineering & Technology” and “Humanities, Social Sciences and Business Studies”, and to rank (a general ranking of top 5%, top 10%, top 20%, etc.) the nominees among the candidates of the relevant category.
12. Each institution will conduct a *plagiarism checking* on the “Research Plan” and “Vision Statement” submitted by Fellowship applicants. In the event that an applicant has submitted false information or committed plagiarism with suspicious contents, both applications for the Fellowship Scheme and admission application at CityU may be disqualified.
13. As stipulated by the RGC, for applicants from non-English speaking universities, unless they provide proof that English is the language of instruction for all courses for the entrance qualifications of their proposed PhD programmes, they are required to attach score results of Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IETLS) in their PhD applications. College English Test (CET) Band 6 is not accepted as equivalent test.
14. Schools/Departments are required to *provide detailed and elaborative assessment comments* on the recommended candidates through an online “Application Evaluation Form”. Schools/Departments are highly recommended to form a School/Departmental Selection Panel to coordinate the admission interview, selection and final submission of the online Application Evaluation Form of HKPFS.
15. Firm admission offers using College/School’s TA/RA scheme quotas will be given to selected CityU’s nominees, even if they were not selected for the Fellowship by RGC. The admission offer will be confirmed by the University in January 2017.

RGC’s Selection Panels

16. Shortlisted applications, subject to their areas of studies, will be reviewed by one of the two HKPF Selection Panels with experts in the relevant broad areas -- one for “Sciences, Medicine, and Engineering & Technology” and another one for “Humanities, Social Sciences and Business Studies”.

Notification of Results

17. The RGC will notify the successful applicants of the results in March 2017.

Website

18. Details of the Scheme and online application forms can be found in the following websites:
 - Research Grants Council website - <http://www.rgc.edu.hk/hkpfs>
 - City University of Hong Kong website – <http://www.cityu.edu.hk/sgs/hkphd/index.htm>

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Annex 1

Key Dates

Timeline/Deadline	Application and Selection Procedures
1 December 2016 (12:00:00 GMT +8 hours)	Applicants submit initial application to RGC's Online Application System (OAS) at www.rgc.edu.hk/hkphd to obtain a reference number
6 December 2016	Applicants submit full application to CityU's Online Admission System at http://www.cityu.edu.hk/sgs/oas .
From September – 21 December 2016	Each School/Department forms an selection panel to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• consider applications and conduct admission interviews• perform plagiarism checking on the “research proposal” and “vision statement” of the recommended applications• complete online Application Evaluation Form and forward recommendations, via School Deans/HoDs to the respective C/SGSCs.
by 4 January 2017 latest	C/SGSCs consider and send their recommendations to CRDC.
12 January 2017	CRDC consider C/SGSCs' recommendations and finalize CityU's nominations.
by noon, 16 January 2017	SGS submit CityU's nominations and the application data to RGC.
February 2017	The Review Panels nominated by the RGC will review nominations submitted by all HK institutions.
March 2017	The RGC Secretariat will notify successful candidates about the Fellowship Scheme results via email and publicize the list of awardees on the RGC website.

Abbreviations:

RGC - Research Grants Council of HKSAR

C/SGSC – College/School Graduate Studies Committee of CityU

CRDC – Committee on Research Degrees Candidature of CityU