

Research Grants Council Competitive Research Funding Schemes for the Local Self-financing Degree Sector

**Prof Julie Li
Chair of the Assessment Panel**

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- **How an Application is Assessed**
 - **Panel's Observations**

Assessment Process



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Major Assessment Criteria: Faculty Development Scheme (FDS)

1. Objective and research agenda
2. Research design and methodology
3. Feasibility
4. Innovativeness
5. Research impact

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Panel's Observations on FDS - H & B Subjects

Humanities & Social Sciences	✓	Included potential ethical considerations (if applicable)
	✗	Lack of strong argument for theoretical frameworks
Business Studies	✓	Addressed new business trends and issues
	✗	Lack of sound research methodologies

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Panel's Observations on FDS - Sciences Subjects

Biology & Medicine	✓	Extended the scope and method of study to international standards
	✗	Without solid justifications for hiring SRA
Engineering	✓	Involved a certain degree of AI, robotics, big data and machine learning
	✗	Without a compelling research story
Physical Sciences	✓	Acceptable overall quality of the submitted proposals
	✗	Weak in stipulating the research methodologies

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What Makes a Good FDS Proposal?

OBJECTIVES

- **Specific & clear focus** Vs Lack of linkage & articulation

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- **Well-argued study significance** Vs Limited impact & outreach

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

- **Detailed data collection & analysis plans** Vs Lack of research instruments
- **Appropriate methodology (qualitative/quantitative)** Vs Poor sampling strategy

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What Makes a Good FDS Proposal? (cont'd)

FEASIBILITY / LIMITATION

- **Comprehensive implementation plans** Vs Lack of contingency plans

OTHERS

- Address comments / feedback as far as possible (for re-submission)
- Well-thought-out plan for dissemination of research findings
- Proofread the entire proposal (ensure no typos & grammatical mistakes!)

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Tips on Budget Planning

OVERALL PRINCIPLES

- Provide sound justifications for each requested item
- Avoid excessive budget request
- In line with the proposed project duration

SUPPORTING STAFF

- Junior RA should generally be sufficient
- Hire of senior researcher may weaken PI's role

RELIEF TEACHER

- Plan the teaching relief expenses together with the requested supporting staff (e.g. RA)

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Major Assessment Criteria: Inter-Institutional Development Scheme (IIDS)

- 1. Objectives**
- 2. Proposed research related activities**
- 3. Feasibility**
- 4. Impacts**

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Panel's Observation on IIDS

- ✓ Identified timely topics / themes of conference
- ✓ Organised plans for conferences / forums
- ✓ Collaborated with internationally renowned experts
- ✗ Lack of explanation for conference outcome
- ✗ Lack of technology utilisation
(e.g. without considering hybrid mode for conference)

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Major Assessment Criteria: Institutional Development Scheme (IDS) Research Infrastructure Grant

1. Long term impact and sustainability
2. Expected deliverables and likelihood of building up research capacity of the institution
3. Feasibility and implementation strategy
4. Financial arrangement

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Panel's Observation on IDS Research Infrastructure Grant

- ✓ Clear agenda with feasible implementation plan
- ✓ Research themes & proposed activities align with the strategic areas of institutions
- ✓ Synergy generated between projects & existing research centres of institutions
- ✗ Lack of specific research directions
- ✗ Lack of suitable expertise in the proposed research field
- ✗ Request for office / standard equipment without strong justifications (e.g. personal electronic devices, high-performance computing devices, standard office equipment etc.)

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Major Assessment Criteria Institutional Development Scheme (IDS) Collaborative Research Grant

1. Academic merit of the proposal
2. Long term goal of the proposal and its potential to develop into an area of strength
3. Opportunities for effective synergy among the participating researchers, research groups and institutions
4. Viability of the proposal
5. Research impact

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Panel's Observation on IDS Collaborative Research Grant



Innovative & interesting topics

Identified important research questions

Advanced technology incorporated in the proposal

Deficiency in methodology & sampling strategies

Lack of strong justifications on requested budget

Lack of sufficient knowledge of project teams

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Q & A

Thank you!

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