

My experience in the HMRF Research Fellowship Scheme

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My experience in below aspects

- ▶ Areas to note during the application stage
- ▶ Preparation of the interview
- ▶ Challenges I have encountered during the project period and how I have managed the problems

Preparing the application

Understand the nature of this scheme

- A **nurturing scheme** to help us develop/enhance skills and strengths in healthcare research
 - Become an independent researcher in related fields
- What items are involved
 1. An overseas training programme
 2. A research project
 3. A mentorship programme



Preparing the application

- ▶ Liaise with an overseas research group for training programme
 - ▶ Need to be related to the proposed project
- ▶ Write a small-scale research project
 - ▶ With translation value in public health or health services in Hong Kong
 - ▶ A well-design study with **strong rationales** and **sounded methodology**
 - ▶ Understand the **potential pitfalls** of your study and come up with **alternative plans**
- ▶ Secure support of a mentor from the same institute
 - ▶ Find someone who is an expert in the filed of your proposed research
 - ▶ Need to consider their accessibility

Preparation of the interview

- Get familiar with your training plan and proposed study
- Anticipate the feasibility of your proposed project
- Think of some backup plans for the pitfalls

Be confident!



Challenges encountered

Before project commencement

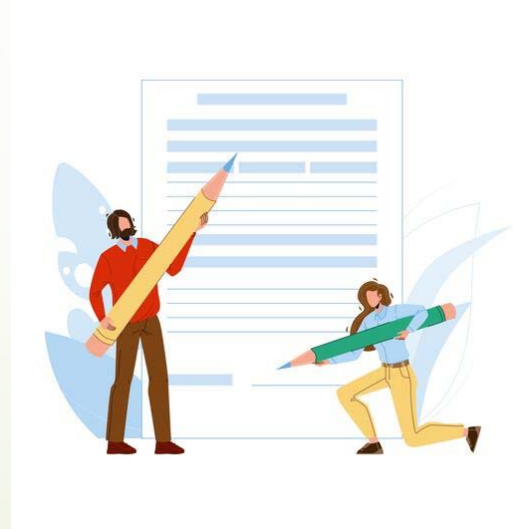
1. Obtaining the required approvals (CREC and CTC) took more times than I thought.
 - Communicate with Research Fund Secretariat for approval of submission extension
 - Prepare in advance even before you know the grant results



Challenges encountered

During the project period

2. Realized differences between real settings and the proposal.
 - Communicated with Research Fund Secretariat for approval of proposal change and budget revision with sufficient justification



Challenges encountered

During the project period

3. Slow recruitment

- COVID-19
 - Stricter infection controls in research sites
 - Low incentive
 - Insufficient manpower
- Discussion with mentor and other team members for alternative plans
 - Revised research protocols to enlarge the patient pool (without altering the aims of the research project) → seek approvals from CREC (or CTC) and HMRF GRB
 - Recruited more manpower → change in the staff cost → seek HMRF approval



Keys for smooth execution of the research project

- ▶ Timely communication with team members (particularly your mentor for advice).
- ▶ Timely communication with the HMRF secretary for any changes needed.
 - ▶ Progress report
 - ▶ Interim report
- If project extension needed? Yes → change in timelines → Seek HMRF approval.

**Thank you and good luck!
You can do it!**

