



The Chinese University of Hong Kong

International Joint Supervision of PhD Students Scheme

Bidding for Provost's Strategic Allocation of Centrally-funded RPg Places for 2025–26 Admission

Guidelines for Applicants
Deadline: 15 November 2024

1. Preamble

Internationalisation is a key priority in the University's pursuit of research excellence. Research output from international collaboration tends to yield higher citation and greater impact. As part of CUHK's internationalisation strategy underlined in the Strategic Plan (CUHK 2025), the University must enhance its global engagement to improve output, increase visibility, and demonstrate impact in order to stay competitive. This will in turn strengthen CUHK's reputation and reinforce its position as a world-class university.

Joint supervision of PhD students is one of the most effective and efficient tools to drive and foster international research collaboration, in addition to bringing a highly valued learning opportunity to students. To encourage faculty members to engage in joint supervision of PhD students with their international peers, 15 PhD places have been earmarked for competitive bidding under the Provost's Strategic Allocation of Centrally-funded Research Postgraduate (RPg) places for 2025–26 admission. Under which, the PhD students would be required to undertake research attachments of at least six months with the host supervisors at the partner institutions to support the joint research between their CUHK supervisors and their collaborators abroad.

2. Partners & Strategic Areas for Collaboration

The current round of bidding supports collaborative research projects with priority partners primarily in the four strategic research areas¹ identified in CUHK 2025, which are *China: Tradition and Modernity*; *Innovative Biomedicine*; *Information and Automation Technology*; and *Environment and Sustainability*. Projects which do not fall within the four areas may also be considered.

¹ To learn more about CUHK's research priorities, please visit [Research and Innovation - CUHK Strategic Plan 2021-2025](#).

The priority partners for the current round of application include:

- Chulalongkorn University, Thailand
- Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Germany
- Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
- National University of Singapore, Singapore
- The University of Auckland, New Zealand
- The University of Chicago, USA
- The University of Manchester, UK
- The University of Queensland, Australia
- The University of Sydney, Australia
- University College London, UK
- University of California, Los Angeles, USA
- University of California, San Diego, USA
- University of Exeter, UK
- University of Toronto, Canada
- Utrecht University, the Netherlands

Strong applications to work with other top-tier institutions will also be considered. Ideally, the institutions should be ranked within the top 100 in major global university league tables.

3. Eligibility

Full-time academic staff members from all disciplines who are expected to be assigned by their respective Graduate Panels as Primary Supervisors to provide training to PhD students and guide them through their studies are welcome to apply.

4. Application

4.1 An eligible staff member shall not make more than one application under each scheme in the application exercise of a given year. He/she is allowed to apply for more than one scheme but will receive not more than one place out of the three schemes, if shortlisted for the award:

- (a) Four Strategic Research Areas under the 'CUHK 2025' Strategic Plan and High-impact Interdisciplinary Research: administered by the Office of Research and Knowledge Transfer Services and the Graduate School Office;
- (b) Joint Training Scheme for PhD Students with Mainland Strategic Partners: administered by the China Engagement Office and the Graduate School Office; and
- (c) International Joint Supervision of PhD Students Scheme: administered by the Office of Academic Links and the Graduate School Office.

4.2 Each proposal must include a PI from CUHK and a host collaborator from the partner institution. The proposal should demonstrate how the joint supervision of the PhD student will contribute to the research collaboration between the CUHK PI and the collaborator as well as the impact the collaboration.

4.3 An [online application form](#) should be completed and submitted together with the following documents:

- Abbreviated Curriculum Vitae of the PIs with a selected list of publications (max. 2 pages).
- Endorsement by the CUHK heads of Graduate Division/Centre and faculty deans/directors of institutes to confirm their support for the application.

5. Selection

The allocation is made on a competitive basis. Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research in consultation with Provost will form an assessment panel, with Area Coordinators of the Strategic Areas and also experts fostering global engagement co-opted, to review the applications holistically, with reference to the assessment criteria below:

- a) Academic merit and interdisciplinary/collaborative elements
- b) Relevancy to the Strategic Areas
- c) Potential of achieving high impact at international level
- d) Potential contribution to CUHK's research development and global engagement
- e) Preference to be given to early/mid-career academic staff on substantiable-track contract

6. Joint Supervision of PhD Students

- 6.1 An undertaking from the CUHK PI and the host collaborator from the partner institution to confirm the joint supervision arrangement will be required if the application is successful.
- 6.2 Participating students are expected to complete all taught courses at CUHK before undertaking research attachments at the partner institutions.
- 6.3 Participating students must be registered full-time PhD students during the research attachment. They are expected to undertake their research attachments during the senior years of their study.
- 6.4 The research attachment shall last for at least six months but not more than half of the normative study period. It should take place prior to the submission of the final thesis.
- 6.5 The costs incurred by the joint supervision, including supervision and other incidental research costs should be absorbed by the funding sources from the Departments or Faculties concerned, the CUHK PIs or the host collaborators.
- 6.6 The CUHK PIs or the host collaborators should be responsible for securing funding to support the travelling and living expenses of the participating students.
- 6.7 Participating students will be responsible for arranging the practicalities of the visit, including but not limited to traveling plans, visa application, accommodation, and health and medical insurance coverage as required.

7. Quota Allocation & Student Admission

- 7.1 The allocation of RPg places under the scheme aims specifically to support the University's global engagement and produce impactful outcomes by attracting high-quality PhD candidates to support international collaboration. Participating students should therefore be actively engaged in the relevant research project. The quota should therefore not be regarded as a supplemental allocation to alleviate shortage of RPg places within Faculties/Divisions.
- 7.2 Once allocation is made, the awarded PIs shall initiate the RPg admission process by submitting offer recommendations and necessary documents to the Graduate School Office. Places not filled by the deadline as stipulated in the admission notification will lapse.

- 7.3 The RPg places allocated under this scheme are available to full-time PhD students only. No top-up money will be attached to the student places for the Faculties. An eligible student will receive Postgraduate Studentship (PGS) that covers a period as stipulated in the respective schemes. The PGS is not transferrable and will be withdrawn if the student prematurely leaves the University before completing the programme/during the normative study period. The University will also claw back all vacancies upon the student's departure from the study programme. The other pertinent arrangements for postgraduate student administration will apply.
- 7.4 Recommended candidates are required to go through the standard application and approval procedures, and satisfy all the admission requirements set by the Graduate School and relevant Graduate Divisions at CUHK. The final admission decisions rest with CUHK. Recommended candidates, in consultation with awarded PIs, are also required to submit a study and research plan with reference to the thesis study proposal and outline the timeline for achieving the research milestones. For details about the application procedures, please refer to paragraph 7.1 of the [*Guidelines on Research Postgraduate Collaborations with Non-local Institutions*](#).
- 7.5 Students admitted under this scheme are required to sign an undertaking indicating their agreement to the study plan, and other terms and conditions under the scheme.
- 7.6 Students who are admitted to take up the quota of places shall observe all rules and regulations prescribed by the University authorities with regard to the postgraduate studies monitoring, including and not limited to the submission of online study plan and progress report with the endorsement and approval of the respective Supervisors and Graduate Divisions every year.

8. Residence Requirement

Applications for taking in-residence leave for the period to be spent at the host institutions should be submitted in advance for consideration and approval by the Dean of the Graduate School, with endorsement of the Supervisor and the Head of the Graduate Division concerned. Students' study period at the host institutions will be counted toward their fulfilment of the University's in-residence requirement. Students who are taking in-residence leave cannot register for CUHK courses.

9. Reporting

Awarded PIs should submit a report outlining the outcomes, project impact and opportunities for future collaboration within three months upon completion of the joint supervision of PhD students.

10. Enquiries

For enquiries, please contact Ms. Olivia Kwok, Office of Academic Links, on 3943-1315 or at oliviakwok@cuhk.edu.hk.
