Guidance Notes for Submitting New Proposals for

SEAM@InnoHK

The Third InnoHK Research Cluster

InnoHK Secretariat
Innovation and Technology Commission
March 2025

(I) Preamble

1. InnoHK is a major innovation and technology ("I&T") initiative of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government ("the Government") to develop Hong Kong as the hub for global research collaboration. This involves the establishment of world-class research clusters with research centres / laboratories set up by world-renowned institutions and / or commercial entities to conduct collaborative researches.

2. The Government allocated HK$10 billion in 2017 to set up two InnoHK research clusters, namely –

Health@InnoHK	–	focusing on all types of healthcare technologies
AIR@InnoHK	–	focusing on artificial intelligence and robotics technologies

3. Since its inception, both InnoHK research clusters have attracted many world-renowned universities and research institutions to join. InnoHK has successfully built collaboration with a number of world-renowned universities and research institutes from different economies around the world, bring together over thousands of local and international researchers. The InnoHK research clusters not only enable top-notch universities, research institutes and the industries to collaborate in research and development ("R&D"), but also translate R&D outcomes into impactful, real-world applications for the benefit of the society.

4. To enable Hong Kong to move full steam ahead towards the vision of becoming a global research collaboration hub, the Government would take forward the establishment of the third InnoHK research cluster, ***SEAM@InnoHK***. ***SEAM@InnoHK*** will focus on four research areas, namely **S**ustainable development, **E**nergy, **A**dvanced manufacturing, and **M**aterials. The establishment of ***SEAM@InnoHK*** would help capture and consolidate Hong Kong's R&D strengths, as well as promote advanced technologies and the relevant industries in Hong Kong.

(II) Admission Criteria

5. The emphases of ***SEAM@InnoHK*** are "world-class" and "collaboration", meaning that research centres / laboratories and / or the research programmes that they undertake must involve (1) top-notch institutions and (2) global collaboration with world-class institutions. The university / research institution should assume the role of the lead institution of the research centre / laboratory (hereafter called "parent institute") to operate and manage it in accordance with the requirements as stated in Part (IV) of this Guidance Notes. The Proposal shall be submitted by the parent institute.

6. The following sets out the detailed admission criteria in assessing the Proposal, including –

(a) Academic Standing & Research Achievements
(b) Collaboration & Partnership
(c) Research Programmes and Projects
(d) Key Personnel of the Research Centre / Laboratory
(e) Talent Development and Engagement
(f) Technology Adoption / Commercialisation
(g) Societal Impact
(h) Key Performance Indicators

(a) Academic Standing & Research Achievements

7. The parent institutes and their major collaborator(s) should be among the global top echelon of institutions in the relevant fields, such as top 100 in the relevant subjects in the QS World University Rankings, the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, the Academic Ranking of World Universities, etc.

8. The parent institutes and their major collaborator(s) should demonstrate a solid track record of R&D achievements as reflected by, for instance, Scopus Citation Database or other objective indicators. Besides, the parent institutes should possess good track record of R&D

collaboration with universities / research institutions / commercial entities in the relevant field. At the same time, the parent institutes and their major collaborator(s) should have good experience in facilitating technology transfer or promoting technological entrepreneurship. A good track record in collaboration with global corporations and / or investors in the relevant technology areas would be most desirable.

(b) Collaboration & Partnership

(i) Research Collaboration with Non-local Universities / Research Institutions

9. The research centre / laboratory should conduct collaborative researches that are innovative, world-class, of global relevance and addressing real-world problems, in collaboration with world-renowned non-local universities and research institutions. The research centre / laboratory should elaborate on how it plans to collaborate with these non-local universities / research institutions, and attract collaboration partners and talents to come to Hong Kong, accompanied by a support letter signed off by an officer of the relevant non-local universities / research institutions who is at least at the Vice-President level.

(ii) Research Collaboration with Local Universities / Research Institutions

10. Fostering research collaboration amongst multiple local universities and research institutions in relevant fields would enhance the collective and synergetic effort of researchers and talents from these universities in conducting research projects, leveraging diverse expertise and resources. Such partnerships not only benefit the implementation of the research projects, but also nurture local talents who may, in return, contribute to the long-term R&D development in Hong Kong. To support these collaborative initiatives, the Proposals that include collaboration with local universities / research institutions will be considered favourably. The research centre / laboratory should elaborate on how it plans to collaborate with local universities / research institutions, accompanied by a support letter signed off by an officer of the relevant local universities /

research institutions who is at least at the Vice-President level. The possibility of inter-research centre / laboratory collaboration for greater synergy in the InnoHK ecosystem should also be explored.

(iii) Industry Collaboration, Contribution and Sponsorship

11. The research centres / laboratories are expected to build strong industry collaborations in their research areas, for transformation and realisation of the R&D outcomes which, in the long run, enabling the research centres / laboratories to be operated on a self-sustaining basis. Against this backdrop, the research centres / laboratories should establish research collaboration with industries pro-actively. By collaborating with major industry players, the research centres / laboratories would gain access to practical insights, market needs, and cutting-edge technologies, ensuring that the R&D deliverables are relevant and impactful to major real-world final outcomes / applications / products and suitable for commercialisation in the market. They should also actively seek industry contribution[1] or sponsorship to strengthen their resources for conducting researches.

12. The research centre / laboratory should submit concrete plan on collaboration with the industries for each research programme in the Proposal. The collaboration plan should include, but not limited to, the following:-

(i) **Supporting evidence of industry backing:** letter of support, expression of interest or memorandum of understanding, etc. from the relevant industries; and

(ii) **Industry contribution / sponsorship:** monetary and/or in-kind support from the industries such as provision of research funding, research laboratories and other resources provided; and

(iii) **Other details of the collaborating industries:** company profile, including the nature of their businesses, size of the companies, annual revenue, shares in the local and overseas market, etc., to

[1] Industry contribution, can be conditional or unconditional, refers to monetary and / or in-kind support from the industries.

reflect the potential of technology transfer / commercialisation of the R&D outcomes in future.

(c) Research Programmes and Projects

13. The research centre / laboratory should propose research programmes / projects that are innovative, world-class, of global relevance and have high potential for technology transfer and commercialisation prospect, as well as bring significant societal impact. The research programmes / projects should be coherent, driven by major final outcomes / applications / products and are capable of addressing major real-world problems. The research centre / laboratory needs to demonstrate a clear and unified theme of the research programmes / projects that aligns with the vision and mission of the research centre / laboratory. Synergy among different programmes / projects within the research centre / laboratory for application of the research outcomes in solving key real-life problems should be clearly demonstrated.

14. The research centre / laboratory is required to include in the Proposal a concrete technology transfer plan for each research programme, which should include activities to be undertaken by the research centre / laboratory and / or its start-ups to be formed, namely securing private funding, disseminating the R&D deliverables and marketing them in the commercial world and / or realising the application in the public sector, etc. The research centre / laboratory should demonstrate that its R&D deliverables are significant technological breakthroughs in addressing major real-life problems, such as improving the shortcomings or overcoming the bottlenecks of major existing products / practices identified by academies / industry stakeholders. The roadmap for the commercialisation of these R&D deliverables should be pragmatic with well-defined pathway, and if possible, supported by solid research results. Please refer to Sections (b)(iii) and (f) for more details.

(d) Key Personnel of the Research Centre / Laboratory

15. The research centre / laboratory should engage key research personnel with strong experience, expertise, network and time commitment in the proposed R&D work.

16. The Head of research centre ("the Head") is responsible for formulating effective strategies, business plans and technology roadmaps for the research centre / laboratory, making recommendations to the Board of Directors ("the Board") on implementation of R&D projects, and leading the management in the day-to-day running of the research centre / laboratory. Therefore, he should be a person of high calibre and possess excellent leadership skills with outstanding / world-renowned R&D background. To build strong industry collaboration, the senior management team of the research centre / laboratory should have excellent knowledge and understanding of global technological and market trends as well as industry experience to help the research centre / laboratory establish a good network of contacts in relevant business and technology circles in Hong Kong, the Mainland and internationally.

17. The research centre / laboratory should also engage at appropriate juncture sufficient and capable business development professionals and administrators, to respectively assist in the commercialisation of research deliverables as well as effectively handling all administrative matters, including the timely submissions of reports of reasonably good quality in terms of accuracy and consistency.

(e) Talent Development and Engagement

18. The research centre / laboratory should strongly commit in nurturing local research talents, in different research capacities and positions, through their active involvement in the research centre's / laboratory's research programmes.

19. The research centre / laboratory should also elaborate on how it plans to attract non-local talents to come to Hong Kong (e.g. secondment of overseas / Mainland I&T talents to Hong Kong).

(f) Technology Adoption / Commercialisation

20. The research centre / laboratory should submit concrete technology transfer plan for each research programme in the Proposal. The plan should include activities to be undertaken by the research centre / laboratory and / or its start-ups –

- to secure private funding;
- to disseminate the R&D deliverables;
- to market the R&D deliverables in the commercial world, e.g. business model, target markets and customers, product roadmap, go-to-market strategy, sales & marketing plan, etc.; and / or
- to realise the application of the R&D deliverables in the public sector, i.e. the adoption of the R&D deliverables by government departments, public bodies, charitable organisations, etc.

(g) Societal Impact

21. The research centre / laboratory should aim at achieving significant societal impact[2].

22. The research centre / laboratory should elaborate the societal impact of individual research programmes. For impacts which may require considerable time to achieve (e.g. invention of new materials), there should be clear and achievable annual milestones for technology transfer.

23. Questions to be addressed should include, but not limited to, the following –

[2] "Impact" shares the same definition in Hong Kong University Grants Committee's Research Assessment Exercise 2020, which is defined as "the demonstrable contributions, beneficial effects, valuable changes or advantages that research qualitatively brings to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life whether locally, regionally or internationally; and that are beyond academia".

(i) Who are the potential beneficiaries of the research centre's / laboratory's research deliverables in the short term (1 to 3 years), medium term (4 to 10 years) and long term (over 10 years)?

(ii) How will the potential beneficiaries be benefited? What is the significance of these benefits? What will be the objective demonstrable / measurable benefits beyond academia?

(iii) What will be done during and / or after the project to increase the likelihood of achieving the identified benefit and reaching the identified beneficiaries?

(h) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

24. The research centre / laboratory should propose the following KPIs targets for the entire operating period –

- No. of R&D projects conducted
- No. of PhD students trained
- No. of papers published in scientific journals
- No. of patents applied for, patents granted, patent utilisation rate, patented technologies and income-generating patented technologies
- No. of licensing agreements signed
- No. of industry contributors and sponsors and cash equivalent value if the contribution or sponsorship are in-kind
- No. of projects with industry participation
- Amount of research centre / laboratory income
- No. of start-ups spun off from the laboratory's work, private investment secured by start-ups, revenue generated by start-ups, valuation of the start-ups and job positions filled in the start-up(s) in Hong Kong

For details on these KPIs, please refer to **Appendix 6 of Annex B**.

(III) Financial Support of Research Centre / Laboratory

(a) Financial Support

25. Normally, the financial support can be committed for 4 to 5 years, subject to the merits of research programmes of the individual research centre / laboratory. Financial support out of 5 years will not be considered in the current application.

26. The current ambit of the financial support package and its major components, namely R&D costs, non-R&D costs, capital & fitting-out costs and administrative overhead, are set out as follows –

(i) ***R&D cost***: It covers research funding which includes, but not limited to, cost of R&D personnel, equipment, consumables, etc. R&D expenditure incurred outside R&D Centre is capped at 50% of the total R&D expenditure for the research project concerned[3].

(ii) ***Non-R&D cost***: It includes, but not limited to, rental & management fee, pay for administrative staff, travelling, accommodation for non-local personnel, utilities, legal & accounting, publicity, training, maintenance, office & other relevant expenses, etc.

(iii) ***Capital & fitting-out costs***: It includes, but not limited to, works for initial commissioning, major equipment, periodic renovation / upgrade, etc.

(iv) ***Administrative overhead***: It refers to management oversight of the operation of the research centre / laboratory from the parent institute. The administrative overhead is capped at 8% of the total of R&D costs, non-R&D costs and capital & fitting-out costs of the entire operating period.

[3] If any research work for the R&D Project is to be conducted outside the R&D Centre, including at the premises of the parent institute and collaborators, the R&D Centre shall seek the Government's prior written approval of such arrangement by providing detailed justifications in the Project Proposal and/or Annual Plans.

27. For making estimates for the Proposal of items (i) and (ii) above, please make reference to the Standard Rates for Funding at **Appendix of Annex A**. Please be reminded that where funding for a project exceeds HK$50 million, approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council is required.

28. The amount of funding support from InnoHK will be contingent upon various factors including, but not limited to, the Proposal, the funding situation of InnoHK, etc.

(b) Research Talent Hub ("RTH")

29. To nurture technology talent and encourage them to pursue a career in innovation and scientific research, the Innovation and Technology Commission ("ITC") has launched the RTH[4] to provide funding support for organisation / company to engage research talent for research and development work. The research centre / laboratory may consider making use of the funding support provided by the RTH to supplement the manpower supported by InnoHK and help nurture I&T talent, but that the number should be kept to a reasonable level and that the principle of "no double subsidy" should be observed.

[4] For details of the RTH, please refer to the website at https://www.itf.gov.hk/en/funding-programmes/nurturing-talent/research-talent-hub/research-talent-hub-for-itf-projects-rth-itf-/index.html

(V) Governance and Operation of the Research Centre / Laboratory

(a) Governance and Support from Parent Institute

30. A robust governance structure at the research centre / laboratory level and by parent institute is expected to ensure the work of the research centre / laboratory is undertaken with high scientific and professional standards with the utmost diligence and care, so as to safeguard the best interest of the Government for the benefit of the society as a whole.

31. The Board is the governing body of the research centre / laboratory. It is responsible for formulating overall values, strategic directions and policies of the research centre / laboratory and overseeing management of the business to ensure that the purposes, values and strategies of the research centre / laboratory align with the vision and mission of InnoHK. The functions of the Board shall include, but not limited to, the following –

- to develop and review the research centre's / laboratory's policies and practices on corporate governance;
- to steer the research direction of the research centre / laboratory;
- to monitor the operational and financial sustainability of the research centre / laboratory;
- to oversee the research centre / laboratory in the conduct of the R&D projects;
- to establish and oversee standing committees, if any, under the Board;
- to appoint and monitor senior management officers of the research centre / laboratory;
- to develop and review the code of conduct and compliance manual, if any, applicable to employees and directors, and their implementation;
- to examine and endorse the Annual Plans and Annual Estimates;
- to examine and endorse the Annual Reports and the Audited Statements; and
- to ensure that the funds are expended in accordance with the terms of relevant agreements, guidelines and proposals.

The above will be detailed in the agreements signed between the research centre / laboratory and the Government.

32. As a minimum baseline, the Board should consist of at least one representative of Vice-President level or above from its parent institute, one representative from knowledge / technology transfer office or equivalent of its parent institute, and at least two board members unaffiliated with the research centre / laboratory. The Board should be led by a Vice-President level or above representative from its parent institute and should not be chaired by the Head. The total number of university representatives and independent board members should exceed that of the research centre's / laboratory's representatives.

33. To further enhance the governance structure and monitoring mechanism of the research centre / laboratory, the parent institute and / or the Board may consider setting up the following standing committees under the Board to oversee particular areas of the research centre / laboratory for better checks and balances –

(i) ***Executive Committee***: responsible for overseeing the businesses and operations of the research centre / laboratory, including development and implementation of the strategy, policies, operational plans, resource management (including staff management), procedures, and budgets of the research centre / laboratory, monitoring the progress of various research centre's / laboratory's activities as well as its performance, and managing its resources, and reporting to the Board in relation to significant decisions and recommendations of the Executive Committee as deemed appropriate. Apart from the Head and other senior management officers of the research centre / laboratory, the Board may deploy its member(s) to the committee to steer its direction.

(ii) ***Science Committee***: provides regular scientific peer review of R&D activities performed by the research centre / laboratory. The composition of the committee should include independent experts in the relevant fields unaffiliated with the research centre / laboratory and collaborators.

(iii) ***Audit Committee***: responsible for the research centre's / laboratory's financial reporting process, internal control and risk management. Members of the committee should be independent and unaffiliated to the research centre / laboratory and collaborators.

The parent institute and / or the Board may consider setting up any other committees as deemed appropriate for the good governance of the research centre / laboratory.

34. These Committees are accountable to the Board for their recommendations and decisions. Mechanism should be in place to report recommendations and decisions made by the Committees to the Board.

(b) Operation of the Research Centre / Laboratory

35. Upon admission to ***SEAM@InnoHK***, the parent institute and the research centre / laboratory shall enter into agreements ("the Agreements") with the Government and Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation ("HKSTP"), which stipulate the rights and obligations of the parties. The parent institute and the research centre / laboratory shall execute in strict accordance with the Agreements signed with the Government and HKSTP.

36. The research centre / laboratory will need to be established as a company limited by guarantee under the Companies Ordinance (Chapter 622, Laws of Hong Kong).

37. For proper monitoring of the operation of the research centre / laboratory, each research centre / laboratory is required to submit annual plans and annual reports for regular monitoring and attend meetings relevant to the monitoring of the progress implementation. Upon the completion of the Agreements, each research centre / laboratory is also required to submit a final report.

38. The research centre / laboratory is also required to submit the Annual Audited Accounts and Final Audited Accounts to assure the

Government that the funding is applied to the research centre / laboratory in accordance with the approved budget and in compliance with the terms and conditions set out in the Agreements. The audited accounts should be reported by independent auditors who must be Certified Public Accountants holding a practicing certificate registered under the Professional Accountants Ordinance (Chapter 50, Laws of Hong Kong) and conducted in accordance with the latest version of the Notes for Auditors of Recipient Organisations issued by the ITC.

(c) Prevention of Bribery

39. The research centre / laboratory shall ensure that it, the Board members, its project team, employees, contractors, consultants, agents or any other personnel who are in any way involved in the research projects and/or the operation of the research centre / laboratory will observe the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Chapter 201, Laws of Hong Kong) ("PBO") and will not offer to or solicit or accept from any personal any advantages as defined in the PBO in relation to the research projects and / or the operation of the research centre / laboratory. The research centre / laboratory shall also caution its Board members, project team, employees, contractors, consultants, agents or any other personnel who are in any way involved in the research projects and / or the operation of the research centre / laboratory against soliciting or accepting any hospitality, entertainment or inducements which would impair their impartiality in relation to the research projects and/or the operation of the research centre / laboratory. The research centre / laboratory shall take all necessary measures (including by way of a code of conduct, internal guidelines or contractual provisions where appropriate) to ensure that its Board members, project team, employees, contractors, consultants, agents or any other personnel who are in any way involved in the research projects and / or the operation of the research centre / laboratory are aware of the aforesaid prohibition and will not solicit or accept any advantages or hospitality which would impair their impartiality, etc. in the conduct of or in relation to the research projects and/or the operation of the research centre / laboratory.

(d) Safeguarding National Security

40. The parent institute and the research centre / laboratory shall conform in all respects with all legislation (including the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region), regulations and by-laws of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The Government may at any time through ITC terminate all or any part of the funding support by giving written notice to the research centre/ laboratory with immediate effect on occurrence of any of the following events –

- the parent institute and / or the research centre / laboratory have engaged or are engaging in acts or activities that are likely to constitute or cause the occurrence of offences endangering national security or which would otherwise be contrary to the interest of national security;
- the continued engagement of the parent institute and / or the research centre / laboratory, or continued performance of the Agreements is contrary to the interest of national security; and
- the Government reasonably believes that any of the events mentioned above is about to occur.

(e) Handling of Information

41. Information provided by the research centre / laboratory in their applications and reports will be kept by the ITC in confidence and all personal data will be handled in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Chapter 486, Laws of Hong Kong). In this regard, the Government shall have the right to disclose, without further reference to the research centre / laboratory, whenever it considers appropriate, Discloseable Information[5] to other Government bureaux /

[5] "Discloseable Information" means any information provided by the research centre / laboratory to the Government in their reply form and reports including without limitation, information in connection with, their applications under InnoHK, the names and addresses of and other information on the research centre / laboratory to the Government, including past applications, other InnoHK projects they are undertaking / proposes to or will undertake, details of the applications and the projects, the project costs and the InnoHK funding, and any other information provided by the research centre / laboratory to the Government, and information on the research centre / laboratory's service provider(s) and supplier(s).

departments, statutory bodies or relevant third parties for the purposes as prescribed in the reply form / reporting templates, or other related purposes. Relevant information may also be posted on the ITC website for public access. By submitting the application / report, the research centre / laboratory irrevocably and unconditionally authorise the Government to make and consent to the Government making any of the aforesaid disclosure.

42. By submitting the application, reply form / report, the research centre / laboratory is regarded to have agreed to, and to have obtained from the entities and each individual whose information (including personal data) is provided in the relevant document, their consent for the disclosure, use and further disclosure by the Government of the information (including personal data) for the purposes set out above.

(VI) Submission of Proposal

(a) Proposal

43. A Proposal may cover one or more of the four focused themes under ***SEAM@InnoHK***

44. Each parent institute is confined to submit no more than **TWO** proposals under ***SEAM@InnoHK***.

45. As stated in paragraph 10, Proposals demonstrating collaborations amongst local universities / research institutions will be considered favourably. Parent institute is strongly recommended to collaborate with more local universities / research institutions that share an interest in the same research area to form a research centre / laboratory. Support letters from these local collaborators should be attached to the Proposal upon submission.

46. Emphasis is also placed on the commercialisation of R&D deliverables and major final outcomes / applications / products with significant social impact. Key milestones to technology transfer / commercialisation should be clearly presented in the Proposal (please refer to Appendix 4.1 of **Annex B).** Proposals should be driven by major final outcomes / applications / products, addressing major real-world problems with significant technological breakthroughs and high potential in technology transfer / commercialisation. To demonstrate the technological breakthroughs in tackling real-world problems, detailed R&D plans, methodologies, targeted technical specifications and comparative analysis should be provided for each research project (please refer to Appendix 4 of **Annex B)**. Proposals that fail to present the above with a realistic technology transfer / commercialisation plan and technological breakthroughs / clear applications would **NOT** be further considered in the course of assessment. As stated in paragraph Section (II)(b)(iii) above, collaboration with industries should be supported by evidence of industry backing, such as letter of support, expression of interest or memorandum of understanding, etc., which should be submitted together with **Appendix 3 of Annex B**.

47. The Proposal should –

(i) adopt the MS Word format, with Times New Roman 12 point font;
(ii) include Curriculum Vitae (CV) for each member of senior management team and Key Research Personnel;
(iii) include the proposed budget adopting the format at **Annex A**;
(iv) not exceed 120 A4 pages in total, excluding CVs and support letters;
(v) For each project under each Research Programme, there should be a maximum of four A4 pages in total on detailed R&D plan, methodology, targeted technical specifications and comparative analysis to justify the viability of the proposal from the technical perspective;
(vi) For each Research Programme, there should be at least 10 A4 pages on technology transfer / commercialisation plan and its societal impact; and
(vii) follow the contents and their orders as listed in the Summary detailed at **Annex B**.

(b) Summary of the Proposal

48. The research centre / laboratory is required to submit a Summary together with the Proposal. The template on the Summary is at **Annex B**. Please refer to the notes detailing the requirements and follow the sample to fill in the required information. The template itself should not be revised.

49. Please ensure the information in the Summary and the Proposal tallies with each other.

(c) Deadline for Submission

50. The Proposal and the Summary should be submitted to the ITC by email (innohk@itc.gov.hk) on or before **29 August 2025 (Friday) at 17:00 hrs (Hong Kong Time)**.

Late submission or **any revisions** after the deadline will **NOT be accepted unless there are exceptional justifications.**

(d) Enquiries

51. If you have any enquiries about InnoHK or the guidance notes, please contact the Secretariat via:

Email:	innohk@itc.gov.hk
Telephone No.:	(852) 3855 7671
Address:	Rooms 509-518, 5/F, Shui On Centre, 6-8 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Annex A
(to the Guidance Notes)

Proposed Budget for New Proposal for InnoHK Research Clusters

Summary
(In HK$ Million rounded to two decimal places)

Budget for the Entire Operating Period: **HK$XXX.XX M**

Expenditure Items	Entire Operating Period
A. Capital & Fitting-out Costs	**X.XXM** (XX% of budget)
B. Non-R&D Costs	
C. R&D Costs	
D. Administrative Overhead	(capped at 8% of total of A, B and C)
Research Centre's / Laboratory's InnoHK budget ceilings *(i.e. A+B+C+D)*	

*[**Note to Research Centre / Laboratory:** The figures above should tally with Appendix 5 of Annex B to the Guidance Notes.]*

Detailed Breakdown
(In HK$ Million rounded to two decimal places)

Number of Years of Operating Period (N)**: _____ years**

(A) Capital & Fitting-out Costs

Expenditure Category and Item	**One-off cost** (if applicable) (i)	**Average cost per year** (if applicable) (ii)	**Total** *i.e. (i)+(ii)xN*	**Remarks / Justifications**
Planning & fitting-out work				
Major equipment (*unit cost of HK$0.5M or above)*				
		Total for (A)		

(B) Non-R&D Costs

Expenditure Items	**One-off cost** (if applicable) (i)	**Average cost per year** (if applicable) (ii)	**Total** *i.e. (i)+(ii)*x*N*	**Remarks / Justifications**
Rental, management fee and other accommodation costs *(Note)*				
Utilities				
Staff cost for administrative staff *(Note)*				
Accommodation support for non-local staff *(Note)*				
Legal and accounting				
Publicity				
Repair and maintenance				
Travelling *(Note)*				
Office and other expenses				
		Total for (B)		

(C) R&D Costs

Expenditure Items	**One-off cost** (if applicable) (i)	**Average cost per year** (if applicable) (ii)	**Total** *i.e. (i)+(ii)*x*N*	**Remarks / Justifications**
Research Programme (RP) 1: [Title] (X projects)				
- Project Leader(s) *(Note)* - Research Staff *(Note)* - Minor Equipment - Consumables - Others				
		Sub-total of RP1:		

Expenditure Items	**One-off cost** (if applicable) (i)	**Average cost per year** (if applicable) (ii)	**Total** *i.e. (i)+(ii)xN*	**Remarks / Justifications**
Research Programme (RP) 2: [Title] (X projects)				
- Project Leader(s) *(Note)* - Research Staff *(Note)* - Minor Equipment - Consumables - Others				
Sub-total of RP2:				
Total for (C):				

Note: Please make reference to the Standard Rates for Funding at **Appendix** for compiling the budget.

(D) Research Centre / Laboratory Income *(To tally with the same KPI)*

Research Centre / Laboratory Income Items	**Total Income in Entire Operating Period** (N)	**Remarks / Justifications**
Licensing Activities		
Industry Contribution		
Sponsorship and Donation		
Net income from 3rd party projects		
Other net income (please specify:)		
Total for (D)		

Appendix

InnoHK - Standard Rates for Funding

Expenditure Items	Rate / Range for Funding
Non-R&D operating cost	
Pay for administrative staff	No more than 60% of annual non-R&D operating cost (i.e. excluding capital cost and R&D expenditure of research programmes)
Rental (per sq. ft. per month) - Wet laboratory - Medical laboratory Office - Office - Others (e.g. Robotics Catalysing Centre, co-working space, shared admin office, etc.)	To be provided by HKSTP in due course
Management fee (per sq. ft. per month) - Wet laboratory - Medical laboratory Office - Office - Others (e.g. Robotics Catalysing Centre, co-working space, shared admin office, etc.)	To be provided by HKSTP in due course
Accommodation support for non-local personnel Flat rate per month / per night	No more than $3M per year The arrangement should not be more favourable than the parent institute or holding company under its existing policy.
Travelling	No more than 5% of the total funding under *InnoHK*

Expenditure Items	Rate / Range for Funding
R&D expenditure	
Pay for R&D staff (Monthly total staff cost including fringe benefits)	***Ceiling (HK$)***
Chair Professor (clinical)	426,000
Chair Professor (non-clinical)	307,000
Professor (clinical)	351,000
Professor (non-clinical)	241,000
Associate Professor (clinical)	260,000
Associate Professor (non-clinical)	188,000
Assistant Professor (clinical)	189,000
Assistant Professor (non-clinical)	137,000
Principal Researcher	115,000
Senior Researcher	92,000
Researcher / Postdoctoral Fellow	53,000
Research Assistant	32,000
Senior Engineer	106,000
Engineer	75,000
Assistant Engineer	53,000
Engineer Trainee	32,000
Senior Scientist	95,000
Scientist	66,000

Expenditure Items	**Rate / Range for Funding**
R&D expenditure	
Pay for R&D staff (Monthly total staff cost including fringe benefits)	***Ceiling (HK$)***
Principal Analyst / Programmer	143,000
Analyst / Programmer	42,000
R&D expenditure incurred outside the R&D Centre under InnoHK*	No more than 50% of the total R&D expenditure for the research project concerned

* If any research work for the R&D Project is to be conducted outside the R&D Centre, including at the premises of the parent institute and collaborators, the R&D Centre shall seek the Government's prior written approval of such arrangement by providing detailed justifications in the Project Proposal and/or Annual Plans.

Annex B
(to the Guidance Notes)

(Template)
Summary on New Proposal for
InnoHK Research Clusters

[Notes to Research Centre / Laboratory:
1. Format Requirements
- *Please do not amend the template.*
- *Please use Times New Roman 12 point font, margin 2.5cm all around and single-line spacing.*
- *In completing this document, please remove our 'Note to Research Centre/ Laboratory', i.e. blue text.*
- *Please strictly follow the page limits set out in respective Appendices.*
- *Please adopt the format and presentation style in the sample provided as far as possible.*

2. Please ensure consistency and accuracy of information provided.]

I. Overview

Proposed InnoHK Research Centre/ Laboratory: **Name**

InnoHK Cluster: ***Health@InnoHK / AIR@InnoHK / SEAM@InnoHK ****
(delete where inappropriate)*

Proposed Operating Period: DD MMM YYYY to DD MMM YYYY

Head of Research Centre / Laboratory: **Name** (Institute)

Co-Head (if applicable): **Name** (Institute)

Proposed Budget for the Entire Operating Period: **HK$XXX.XXM**

(For ***SEAM@InnoHK*** only)
Research Area(s):
- ☐ Sustainable Development
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Advanced Manufacturing
- ☐ Materials

(please put "✓" into one or more of the above boxes)

Other Research Areas (if any): Name of Research Areas

No. of Research Programmes (RPs) and Projects: X RPs with X projects

II. Other Details

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">(a) Parent Institute and Collaborator(s)</th></tr>
<tr><td>1. Confirmation of Support by the Parent Institute
(p.xx-xx of the Proposal)</td><td>Name of Parent Institute (Parent Institute Abbrev):

Support letter(s) provided</td></tr>
<tr><td>2. Confirmation of Support by Major Research Collaborator(s)
(p. xx, xx-xx)</td><td><u>Proposed Local Collaborator(s)</u>

(i) University / Research Institution:
Name of Collaborator(s) (Collaborators’ Abbrev)

(ii) Industry Collaborator:
Name of Collaborator(s) (Collaborators’ Abbrev)

<u>Proposed Non-local Collaborator(s)</u>

(i) University / Research Institution:
Name of Collaborator(s) (Collaborators’ Abbrev)

(ii) Industry Collaborator:
Name of Collaborator(s) (Collaborators’ Abbrev)

All with support letter(s) provided</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. Academic Standing & Achievements in relevant fields
(p. xx, xx-xx)</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th></th><th colspan="2">Ranking</th></tr>
<tr><th>University / Research Institution</th><th>QS 2025</th><th>Other Indicator(s)</th></tr>
<tr><td>Parent Institute Abbrev</td><td>(subject(s)/ ranking(s))</td><td>(subject(s)/ ranking(s)/ year)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Collaborators’ Abbrev</td><td>(subject(s)/ ranking(s))</td><td>(subject(s)/ ranking(s)/ year)</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">(b) InnoHK Research Centre / Laboratory</th></tr>
<tr><td>1. Vision & Mission
(p. xx, xx-xx)</td><td>Vision: XXX

Mission: XXX

Executive Summary (<u>Appendix 1</u>)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">2. Ownership & Governance Structure
(p. xx, xx-xx)</td><td>Organisation Chart (<u>Appendix 2</u>)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Key Positions and Members (<u>Appendix 2.1</u>)</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. Collaboration
(p.xx, xx-xx)</td><td>Summary of Collaboration (<u>Appendix 3</u>)</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td>4. Research Programmes (RPs)
(p. xx, xx-xx)</td><td><table><tr><th>Name of RP</th><th>No. of Projects</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>
Total of X number of RPs and X number of projects
Summary of Research Programmes (Appendix 4)

Key Milestones of Each Research Project of RP and Technology Transfer / Commercialisation (Appendix 4.1)</td></tr>
<tr><td>5. Faculty & Resources Commitment
(p.xx, xx-xx)</td><td>Planned Presence of Senior Management and Key Research Personnel (Appendix 4.2)</td></tr>
<tr><td>6. Venue Requirement</td><td>Office (XX,XXX sq ft / sq m)
Wet lab (XX,XXX sq ft / sq m)
Dry lab (XX,XXX sq ft / sq m)
Special requirements: (e.g. floor height, floor loading, electricity requirement)</td></tr>
<tr><td>7. Proposed Indicative Budget
(p.xx, xx-xx)</td><td>Proposed Budget (Appendix 5)</td></tr>
<tr><td>8. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) over the Proposed Operating Period
(p.xx, xx-xx)</td><td>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (Appendix 6)</td></tr>
<tr><td>9. Headcount of R&D Personnel of the Research Centre / Laboratory
(p.xx, xx-xx)</td><td>There will be a total of XX number of staff working for the research centre / laboratory, including X number of staff from overseas and X number of staff from Mainland.

Headcount and Talent Development of the Research Centre / Laboratory (Appendix 7)</td></tr>
</table>

Table of Appendices

***Name of Centre** (Abbrev)*

Heading	Appendix
(i) Executive Summary *(p.xx, xx-xx of the Proposal)*	1
(ii) Organisation Chart *(p.xx, xx-xx)*	2
(iii) Key Positions and Members *(p.xx, xx-xx)*	2.1
(iv) Summary of Collaboration *(p.xx, xx-xx)*	3
(v) Summary of Research Programmes (RPs) *(p.xx, xx-xx)*	4
(vi) Key Milestones of Each Research Project of RP and Technology Transfer / Commercialisation *(p.xx, xx-xx)*	4.1
(vii) Planned Presence of Senior Management and Key Research Personnel *(p.xx, xx-xx)*	4.2
(viii) Proposed Budget *(p.xx, xx-xx)*	5
(ix) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) *(p.xx, xx-xx)*	6
(x) Headcount and Talent Development of the Research Centre / Laboratory *(p.xx, xx-xx)*	7

Appendix 1

Executive Summary

Name of Research Centre / Laboratory *(Abbrev)*

[Note to Research Centre / Laboratory:

- *Please limit this Executive Summary to **two pages**.*
- *Please extract the relevant information from the Proposal and summarise as necessary.*
- *The summary should include but not limited to the following:*
  - *Vision and Mission statements of the research centre / laboratory;*
  - *Major final outcomes / applications / products to be considered;*
  - *Technological breakthroughs in addressing major real-world problems, such as improving the shortcomings or overcoming the bottlenecks of major existing products / practices identified by academies / industry stakeholders;*
  - *Elaboration on research conducted being innovative, world-class, of global relevance, application driven, and with high potential to bring significant societal impact as well as address real-world problems;*
  - *Synergy among different programmes/projects for application of the research outcomes in solving key real-life problems;*
  - *Overall strategy of technology transfer and commercialisation; and*
  - *Societal Impact.**]***

Appendix 2

Organisation Chart

Name of Research Centre / Laboratory *(Abbrev)*

[Note to Research Centre / Laboratory: *Please insert the organisation chart below. Information should include, but not limited to, holding company, if any, board of directors and committees (e.g. executive committee, science committee, audit committee, etc.), research programmes, collaboration ties, business development team and administrative staff should be contained in the chart. Please ensure the chart is of reasonable resolution and legible.**]***

Appendix 2.1

Key Positions and Members

Name of Research Centre / Laboratory *(Abbrev)*

Key Position	Name	Members' Position(s) at Institute / Organisation / Company
(A) Holding Company of the Research Centre / Laboratory, if any:		
Role:		
e.g. Board Chairperson	[Name]	[Position], [Organisation]
e.g. Board Member		
(B) Board of Directors:		
Role:		
Board Chairperson		
Board Member (Representative from Knowledge Transfer Office)		
Board Member		
Board Member		
Board Member / Head of Research Centre / Laboratory		
(C) Others (e.g. Executive Committee, Science Committee and Audit Committee):		
Role:		

[Note to Research Centre / Laboratory:

The Board of Directors should consist of at least:

- *one representative of **Vice-President level or above** from its parent institute;*
- *one representative from **knowledge / technology transfer office** or equivalent of its parent institute; and*
- *two board members **unaffiliated with the research centre / laboratory**.*

The Board should be led by a Vice-President level or above representative from its parent institute and should not be chaired by the Head.

The total number of university representatives and independent board members should exceed that of the research centre's / laboratory's representatives.]

Appendix 3

Summary of Collaboration

Name of Research Centre / Laboratory *(Abbrev)*

[Note to Research Centre / Laboratory:

I. Collaboration with local and non-local universities/ research institutions

- *The research centre / laboratory should elaborate on how it plans to collaborate with local and non-local institution(s), and attract collaboration partners and talents to come to Hong Kong.*

- *Please include the following in this summary:*
  - *Describe the plan to collaborate with local and non-local institutions, the specific content of the collaborative research, and the expected goals; and*
  - *Explain in detail how the collaborative research will be carried out; and*
  - ***Support letters*** *from those local and non-local institutions should be provided.*

II. Collaboration with industry

- *Please provide concrete plan on collaboration with the major industry players for each research programme in the Proposal. The plan should include details of the collaboration including, but not limited to, the following -*

  (i) Supporting evidence of industry backing
  Letter of support, expression of interest or memorandum of understanding, etc.;

  (ii) Industry contribution / sponsorship
  Amount of monetary and/or in-kind support from the industry such as provision of research funding, research laboratories and other resources provided;

  (iii) Other details of the collaborating industry
  Company profile which includes –
  1. *nature of businesses*
  2. *size of companies (such as number of employees, with breakdown of professional, technical or general staff, if possible)*
  3. *market shares in local and non-local markets*
  4. *annual revenues*
  5. *whether they are listed companies, as well as their listing locations*
  6. *any information showing the robustness of the companies*

III. Inter-research centres / laboratories collaboration

- *In case of any inter-research centre/laboratory collaborations, please provide details.*

Please limit this Appendix to ***three pages****.]*

Appendix 4

Summary of Research Programmes (RPs)

Name of Research Centre / Laboratory *(Abbrev)*

Summary of Research Programmes

	Title of the RP	**No. of projects**	**Estimated budget** (In HK$ Million rounded to two decimal places)	**Funding Priority** (e.g. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th)
RP1				
RP2				
RP3				
RP4				

*[**Note to Research Centre / Laboratory**: Estimated budgets for individual research programme above should tally with Section C of Annex A to the Guidance Notes.]*

*[**Note to Research Centre / Laboratory:** Please follow the following format for summarising each RP and use a new page for each RP. Please extract from the Proposal and summarise as necessary. The summary for individual RP should not exceed three pages. The research programmes / projects should be coherent, driven by major final outcomes / applications / products and are capable of addressing major real-world problems. For each RP, major final outcomes / applications / products to be considered, technological breakthroughs in addressing major real-world problems, as well as the R&D plan, methodology, targeted technical specifications and comparative analysis should also be included in the summary]*

RP 1: [Title of RP] (X No. of Projects) (HK$XX.XXM; Xth priority)

Principal Investigator(s):

- Name (Project Reference) (Role)
- Name (Project Reference) (Role)

(i) Executive Summary *(one page maximum)*

(ii) Major final outcomes / applications / products to be considered, technological breakthroughs in addressing major real-world problems, as well as the R&D plan, methodology, targeted technical specifications and comparative analysis *(one page maximum)*

*[**Note to Research Centre / Laboratory:***
*In the Proposal, please be reminded that there should be a **maximum of 4 pages** for this section for each project under each RP.*

(iii) Technology Transfer and Societal Impact *(one page maximum)*

*[**Note to Research Centre / Laboratory:***
*In the Proposal, please be reminded that there should be **at least 10 pages** for this section for each RP.*

Technology Transfer Plan

Technology transfer refers to the process of transferring (disseminating) technology from the person or organisation that owns or holds it to another person or organisation, in an attempt to transform inventions and scientific outcomes into new products and services that benefit society.

Please elaborate on: valuable intellectual properties generated from the Research Centre's / Laboratory's research, start-up companies spun off from the Research Centre's / Laboratory's research, licensing agreements signed, industry sponsors and sponsorship / donations secured, research contracts signed, engagement and collaboration beyond academia, industry liaison activities, etc.

Please also include any activities already / will be undertaken to:

1. *secure private funding;*
2. *disseminate the R&D deliverables;*
3. *market the R&D deliverables in the commercial world, e.g. business model, target markets and customers, product roadmap, go-to-market strategy, sales & marketing plan, etc.; and/or*
4. *realise the application of the R&D deliverables in the public sector, i.e. the adoption*

of the R&D deliverables by government departments, public bodies, charitable organisations, etc.

Societal Impact

Please refer to the Guidance Notes of the definition and questions to be addressed on the part for "Societal Impact".

The content mentioned should be in line with the milestones set out in Appendix 4.1. Where applicable, please also detail if there is any secured industrial sponsorship, and how the plan can contribute to KPIs related to industry contribution and sponsorship and Research Centre / Laboratory Income at Appendix 6.]

Appendix 4.1

Key Milestones of Each Research Project of Research Programme (RP) and Technology Transfer / Commercialisation

Name of Research Centre / Laboratory *(Abbrev)*

[Note to Research Centre / Laboratory:

- *Please include the deliverables, with targeted technical specifications in their respective milestones.]*

RP 1: [Title of RP] (X No. of Projects) (HK$XX.XXM; Xth priority)

Research Milestones for Individual Project under the RP

Project Title	Key Milestones on an Annual Basis	
Project 1: Project Title	*Year 1*	
	Year 2	
	Year 3	
	Year 4	
	Year 5	
Project 2: Project Title	*Year 1*	
	Year 2	
	Year 3	
	Year 4	
	Year 5	

Technology Transfer / Commercialisation Milestones for the RP

Technology Transfer / Commercialisation Milestones	*Year 1*	
	Year 2	
	Year 3	
	Year 4	
	Year 5	

Appendix 4.2

Planned Presence of Senior Management and Key Research Personnel[1]

Name of Research Centre / Laboratory *(Abbrev)*

*[**Note to Research Centre / Laboratory:** In the Proposal, please attach a Curriculum Vitae (CV) for each member of senior management team and Key Research Personnel (maximum 2 pages).*

The CVs include, but not limited to, the following:

- *personal particulars*
- *academic/professional qualifications*
- *up to five publications related to the programme/project*
- *intellectual property rights (e.g. patents, copyrights, etc.) owned*
- *records demonstrating that they have excellent network with both institutes and industry and are capable to build up collaboration with institutes and industry*

The CVs of the members of senior management team should demonstrate that they have excellent knowledge and understanding of global technological and market trends as well as industry experience to help the research centre / laboratory establish a good network of contacts in relevant business and technology circles in Hong Kong, the Mainland and internationally.]

Name	Rank and Institution	Annual Working Days in the Research Centre / Laboratory
Head(s) of Research Centre / Laboratory		
Senior Management Team		
Local Key Research Personnel (max two project leaders per project)		
Prof XX (RP1)		
Prof XX (Project 1.1)		
Key Research Personnel from Non-Local Collaborator(s)		
Prof XX (Project 1.2)		

[1] Key Research Personnel refers to Research Programme Leader(s) / Project Leader(s)

Appendix 5

Proposed Budget

Name of Research Centre / Laboratory *(Abbrev)*

Budget for the Entire Operating Period: **HK$XXX.XX M**
(In HK$ Million rounded to two decimal places)

Expenditure Item	Entire Operating Period
A. Capital & Fitting-out Costs	**X.XXM** (XX% of budget)
B. Non-R&D Costs	
C. R&D Costs	
D. Administrative Overhead	(capped at 8% of total of A, B and C)
Research Centre's / Laboratory's InnoHK budget ceilings *(i.e. A+B+C+D)*	

***[Note to Research Centre / Laboratory**: The figures above should tally with Annex A to the Guidance Notes.]*

Appendix 6

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Name of Research Centre / Laboratory *(Abbrev)*

Important Note: The proposed KPIs targets throughout the entire operating period are not expected to be adjusted, except under exceptional circumstances which should be fully justified.

Targets	Entire Operating Period
(1) No. of R&D projects conducted	
(2) No. of PhD students trained	
(3) No. of papers published in scientific journals[2]	
Patents (4a) No. of patents applied for (4b) No. of patents granted (4c) Patent utilisation rate (%)[3] (4d) No. of patented technologies[4] (4e) No. of income-generating patented technologies	
Licensing (5) No. of licensing agreements signed	
Industry Contribution and Sponsorship (6a) No. of industry contributors and sponsors (6b) Cash Equivalent Value if any contribution or sponsorship are in-kind (HK$) (6c) No. of projects with industry participation[5]	

[2] The estimates can also include papers published in top-tier conferences.

[3] Patent Utilisation Rate is defined as total no. of patents that have been licensed-out or contributed to R&D project as background IP, divided by total no. of patent applied for/granted that are in force, excluding those "Withdrawn", "Abandoned", "Rejected" and "Expired".

[4] The same technology with more than one patent (e.g. in different countries) should be counted as one only.

[5] Industry participation is defined as cash or in-kind contribution (e.g. data, testing ground, equipment), research collaboration and manpower input to InnoHK projects.

Targets	Entire Operating Period
Centre Income (HK$) (7) Amount of Research Centre / Laboratory Income (HK$)[6]	
Start-ups (8a) No. of start-ups spun off from the laboratory's work (8b) Private investment secured by start-ups (HK$) (8c) Revenue generated by start-ups (HK$) (8d) Valuation of the start-up(s) (HK$) (8e) Job positions filled in the start-up(s) in Hong Kong	

[6] Centre Income includes monetary income from licensing, industry contributions, sponsorships, donations and net income from third party project etc., excluding funding from other Government funding schemes.

Appendix 7

Headcount and Talent Development of the Research Centre / Laboratory

Name of Research Centre / Laboratory (Abbrev)

Research Centre's / Laboratory's Optimal Estimated Headcount[7]

R&D Personnel	Local[8] (No.) (A)	Non-local Personnel (No.) (B)		Sub-total (No.) (A+B)
		Mainland	Overseas	
1. Professors				
2. All Other Research Staff				
3. Trainees / Interns (including PhD students)				
Sub-total (No.)				**Total:** _____ **No.**

- For the total of XX No. of R&D personnel above-mentioned, XX No. are full-time, while XX No. are part-time staff.
- Apart from the R&D personnel, there are a total of XX No. of Non-R&D staff.

[7] Headcount refers to personnel being engaged in InnoHK projects of the Research Centre / Laboratories in the broadest sense, i.e. including but not limited to those not on the payroll, work part-time, being students and interns, engaged under Research Talent Hub (RTH) Scheme, deployed/ seconded from parent institutes, and not physically present in HK (e.g. non-local personnel from overseas collaborators), etc., thus disregard mode of engagement, funding source and work location. Each personnel shall only be counted once. Generally, those staff from parent institutes who provide general support to the Centre should **NOT** be included.

[8] Local personnel refers to personnel who are permanent residents of Hong Kong.

Talent Development

Talent	Local (No.)	Non-local (No.)	Sub-total (No.)
1. Post-doctoral fellow			
2. PhD Students			
3. Interns			
Sub-total (No.)			**Total:** _____ **No.**

[Note to Research Centre / Laboratory: *In the Proposal, please elaborate in detail how the research centre / laboratory will commit in nurturing local research talent, and how it plans to attract talents to come to Hong Kong.]*