Suruhanjaya Komunikasi dan Multimedia Malaysia
Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission

DIGITAL SOCIETY RESEARCH GRANT

APPLICATION GUIDE

3 July 2020

For enquiries please contact:

Secretariat
Research Enterprise Department
Strategic Communications Division
Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission
MCMC Tower 1
Jalan Impact, Cyber 6
63000 Cyberjaya
Selangor Darul Ehsan
Tel   : 03-8688 8000/8354/7854
e-mail : research.enterprise@mcmc.gov.my

TABLE OF CONTENT

Section 1: ABOUT DIGITAL SOCIETY RESEARCH GRANT

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) Digital Society Research Grant ("DSRG") was conceived to contribute towards the enhancement of information resources that are necessary in line with changing community expectations as we navigate the transition towards a sustainable digital civil society.

1.1.2 In meeting these aspirations, beyond the provisioning of infrastructure and communications services there is a corresponding imperative that users possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes to effectively harness the potential of digital media and communications. Accordingly, digital media literacy has become a key competency in the twenty-first century, increasingly pivotal to citizen and user participation across the economy and society. This has been become exceedingly clear in the wake of the pandemic which has heightened our dependence on digital technologies.

1.1.3 An important consideration that underpins MCMC's initiatives has been to ensure that the access and benefits of the Information Age are equally shared by all Malaysians. Cohesive initiatives are required to address issues of opportunity, access, knowledge and skill plus ensuring the readiness of communities in the transition to a digital economy.

1.1.4 In this regard, there is an ongoing requirement for studies that look at the intersections of the digital world with policies, governance and technologies and capture the social and behavioural dimensions of the issues that is sought to be understood.

1.1.5 The expected outcomes of research should contribute to the National Policy Objective to promote a civil society where information-based services will provide the basis of continuing enhancements to quality of work and life.

1.2 Objective

1.2.1 The objective of this grant is to contribute to the evidence base that is necessary for the nation to optimize on the advancements made in the deployment of communications infrastructure and service. This will in turn inform policy, programmes and interventions aimed at promoting the inclusion and participation of all segments of the population as

the nation transitions towards being a fully digitally connected and informed society.

1.3 Research Focus Areas

1.3.1 Research candidates are invited to submit project proposal on one of the following research focus areas encompassing one or more of the identified sub-areas below:

FOCUS AREA 1: DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND CYBERWELLNESS	FOCUS AREA 2: DIGITAL INCLUSION
▪ Competencies and Literacies ▪ Risks and Potential Harm ▪ User Rights and Protection ▪ Awareness and self-regulation ▪ Adoption ▪ Interventions ▪ Programme evaluation, assessment and impact ▪ Policy and Regulation implications ▪ Validation and Improvement ▪ Communication strategies	▪ Empowering productive use of services for "at risk and excluded groups" ▪ Access to health and assisted living services ▪ Adoption ▪ Interventions ▪ Programme evaluation, assessment and impact ▪ Policy and Regulation implications ▪ Validation and Improvement ▪ Communication strategies

1.3.2 The findings and data derived within these focus areas will play a critical role in addressing how best to contribute to the increase in competitiveness in creativity and economic advancement locally and globally in the following key growth areas:

i. Digital Services, e-Commerce and e-Identity;
ii. Technology (Internet of Things, Analytics and Artificial Intelligence); and
iii. Trust, Privacy and Security Management.

1.4 Duration of Project

1.4.1 The maximum duration of a project is six (6) months including submission of research report.

1.4.2 All research must commence within two (2) weeks of the date of the signing of the Letter of Award. The project shall be completed by the time stipulated in the Letter of Award. Applicants shall indicate the project duration in the proposal including each phase of work.

1.5 Grant Amount

1.5.1 The grant amount shall depend on the type and scope of the research project and subject to the guidelines herein may be of a sum of up to Ringgit Malaysia ten thousand (RM10,000).

SECTION 2: APPLICATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

2.1 Eligibility Criteria

2.1.1 The grant is open to full-time academic faculty in schools of communications, social sciences, humanities or related fields of private and public institutions of higher learning (IHLs). Each proposal must have a lead applicant who will be subject to the general terms and conditions for granting.

2.1.2 The following rules apply to applicant:

- Lead applicant must hold a doctoral degree;
- Lead applicant must have an appointment with a local IHL for (at least) the duration of proposed research project;
- The salary of the applicant cannot be financed from this grant;
- The applicant requests the grant on her/his own behalf and on behalf of any possible project consortium; and
- The applicant is responsible for research and financial matters.

2.1.3 Researchers can only submit one proposal as lead applicant within this call and each researcher can act no more than twice as applicant (incl. lead applicant, co-applicant).

2.2 Research Proposal

2.2.1 The research proposal must include the following:

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Problem Statement
- Research Objectives
- Literature Review & Bibliography
- Methodology
- Project Timeline and Deliverables
- Budgetary requirements

2.3 Expenditure Details

2.3.1 *Remuneration and allowances*

This extends to wages and allowance for temporary and contract personnel who are directly engaged in the project. Period of employment and hourly/monthly rate for research assistant must be clearly stated and justified.

2.3.2 *Travel and transportation*
Only travel expenses (domestic) directly related to the project are claimable.

2.3.3 *Rental*
Only rental expenses for building space, equipment, transportation and any other item directly related to the project should be included.

2.3.4 *Research materials and supplies*
This extends to expenses for research materials and supplies directly related to the project such as books, magazines, computer software, photocopying, printing binding, filming, consumables (stationeries, etc.), charges from postage, telephone, fax and other expenses necessary to complete the project. The purchase of mobile phones is not claimable.

2.3.5 *Special Services*
Consultancy, translation, payment of research subjects, data gathering and processing costs are claimable.

2.4 Proposal Submission

2.4.1 The proposals may be in English or Bahasa Melayu and shall be presented clearly and submitted together with the following:

- Proposal Submission Form as per Appendix 1
- Curriculum vitae of the lead applicant and team member(s) involved
- Certified true copies of academic certificates and transcripts
- Other relevant materials to support the proposal

2.4.2 The electronic copy of the proposal and forms should be emailed to the Secretariat with '**DSRG Research Proposal'** in the subject line and addressed to research.enterprise@mcmc.gov.my.

2.4.3 An acknowledgement will be sent once the proposal has been received by the Secretariat. Those submitting proposals and NOT receiving an email confirmation within a week should contact the MCMC.

2.4.4 All applicants are advised to adhere to the requirements therein, submissions that do not follow the requirements shall be disqualified from consideration.

2.5 Process Timeframe

2.5.1 An overview of the DSRG timeframe is as tabulated below:

Process	Date
Issuance of Call for Proposal	3 July 2020 (Friday)
Deadline for submissions	Applications open throughout the year
Evaluation process	Evaluation is conducted once every two months
Notification period	One week after evaluation
Project commencement	2 weeks after signing of Letter of Award

2.6 Evaluation of Proposals

2.6.1 All proposals will be evaluated by a Technical Panel based on open competition and merit, and taking into consideration the following criteria:

- Quality and relevancy of research proposal
- Impact of research
- Suitability of applicant
- Feasibility of the project

2.7 Award/Rejection of Proposals

2.7.1 The Technical Panel reserves the right to consider any other factors that it may deem relevant in the process of evaluation.

2.7.2 The Technical Panel reserves the right to reject proposals that do not meet the submission and evaluation criteria.

2.7.3 Successful applicants will be informed in writing. The Technical Panel may suggest changes to the proposals which may include cost/funding, scope, intellectual property rights, timelines and the successful applicant is required to sign a Letter of Award to indicate the acceptance of the grant.

SECTION 3: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

3.1 Disbursement of Funds

3.1.1 The disbursement of fund will be according to the following disbursement schedule:

Disbursement phase	Quantum (%)	Description
First disbursement	50	Upon signing of Letter of Award
Second disbursement	40	Upon submission of Interim Report
Final disbursement	10	Upon submission and acceptance of Project Report

3.2 Reports

3.2.1 Interim Report (IR)

The Lead Researcher is responsible for the successful implementation of the project according to agreed timelines and for the timely submission of the interim report. It is required for the IR to be submitted in a timely manner (not more than 7 days) upon achieving 50% of project completion,

The IR is to be submitted together with the financial report. Templates for both the IR and financial report will be supplemented by the Secretariat.

The reports will be evaluated against the deliverables and the MCMC will use this mechanism to determine whether it will continue to support the project.

3.2.2 Research Report (RR)

The RR is required to be submitted within 14 days after project completion to the MCMC. The RR shall include (but not limited to) the following:

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Research Objectives
- Literature Review
- Methodology
- Findings
- Direct outputs of the Research
- Achievements based on the original Research objectives
- Implications and recommendations for regulatory and policy considerations
- Recommendations for future research

The RR is to be submitted together with the financial report. Templates for both the RR and financial report will be supplemented by the Secretariat.

3.3 Dissemination of Findings

3.3.1 The MCMC may elect to publish and distribute all or portions of the research report and/or manuscript without restriction. The final project report will be available on the MCMC website.

3.3.2 Researchers shall be invited for presentation of research results at the MCMC meetings/seminar/symposium as well as to participate in media engagement activities arranged by MCMC as and when required.

SECTION 4: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

4.1 Intellectual Property (IP)

4.1.1 Ownership and management of IP, royalties and any other forms of fees received by the institution resulting from the findings or outputs of the research such as licensing of the IP or any other forms of commercialization, shall be governed in accordance with the agreed terms and conditions outlined in the Letter of Award.

4.2 Publishing Rights

4.2.1 The MCMC is entitled to publish the research reports in any form as it deems fit, for the purpose of education or knowledge transfer. This notwithstanding, the Lead Researcher is required to contribute through publishing and presenting research findings in local or international events/media, subject to the prior approval of the MCMC. Copies of all publications are to be submitted to the Secretariat.

4.2.2 The Lead Researcher shall denote and acknowledge the sources of research support for the project and the contribution of the various entities.

- **End of Document -**