



**MALAYSIAN COMMUNICATIONS AND MULTIMEDIA COMMISSION**

**DIGITAL SOCIETY RESEARCH GRANT  
2021 CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**List of Q&A from the Info Session @ 9 March 2021 and FAQs**

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## A. ABOUT DSRG

### 1. **What is the Digital Society Research Grant (DSRG)?**

The DSRG was first launched on 3 July 2020 with the aim to grow a broader evidence-based research studies with a shorter time frame bearing data that is current. The value of each grant is limited to a maximum of RM10,000 for a project duration no longer than six months.

### 2. **What is the objective of the DSRG?**

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. Research under the DSRG takes cognizance that beyond deployment of technology and services there is a need to address the human and social factors and understand the implication of technology and services, the factors enabling user adoption, and impact of MCMC and national initiatives towards the realisation of a Digitally Connected and Informed Society (Digital Society).

## B. APPLICATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

### 3. **Who is eligible to apply?**

The grant is open to full-time academics and researchers in the school of communications, social sciences, humanities or related fields of private and public institutions of higher learning (IHLs). Each proposal must have a lead researcher who will be subject to the general terms and conditions for granting. Please refer to section 2.1 of the CFP guidelines for details.

### 4. **I am a PhD student. Can I apply for DSRG as the Lead Researcher?**

No, the Lead Researcher must already have a PhD to be eligible. However, you may be named as a Co-Researcher for the project.

### 5. **When can I apply?**

Applications may be submitted at any time from 1 March 2021 until 12:00 noon, 31 March 2021.

### 6. **How to submit my application?**

The electronic copy of the proposal and other documents should be emailed to the Secretariat with '**DSRG 2021 Research Proposal**' in the subject line and addressed to [research.enterprise@mcmc.gov.my](mailto:research.enterprise@mcmc.gov.my). Hardcopies are not required.

**7. Can I submit the application directly or I need to go through my university?**

Researchers may submit directly to us. However, if so required, we allow the researchers to submit through their universities.

**8. I have an existing grant and would like to apply for a supplemental grant. Am I eligible?**

No, the MCMC will not consider supplementing existing grants.

**9. I was unsuccessful in the previous round. Are re-submissions accepted?**

Yes, re-submission of the same proposal may be made, however, the applicant is strongly encouraged to re-apply with a revised or improved proposal according to the priority focus areas and as long as they meet the eligibility criteria and requirements of the current Call.

**10. I missed the March 2021 submission deadline. Can I still submit my proposal?**

Any submissions submitted after the closing date will be rejected. You may consider responding to the second 2021 DSRG Cycle which is expected to be announced in the second half of 2021.

**11. How would I know if the Secretariat has received my application?**

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 Secretariat by sending an email to [research.enterprise@mcmc.gov.my](mailto:research.enterprise@mcmc.gov.my).

**C. QUALIFICATION, LEAD RESEARCHER AND RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS**

**12. Are the CVs of the research team members required to be submitted?**

Yes, CVs of all research team members is an important element of the submission requirement.

**13. Do I need to submit my PhD certificate?**

Yes, you need to only submit a verified copy of your PhD certificate. Other academic qualification certificates (e.g. Master's degree) are not necessary.

**14. Are the team members required to submit their academic qualification?**

Yes, they need to only submit a verified copy of their highest academic qualification certificates.

**15. Who can certify my academic qualifications?**

Solicitor, commissioner for declarations, government official, public notary or university staff (head of department/faculty, dean, registrar or other authorised persons).

**16. What if the Lead Researcher does not have expertise in the proposed focus area of the study but the team members do?**

The role of lead researcher is to provide strategic direction to the research project and liaise with MCMC. Thus, it is recommended to the lead researcher have the expertise, skills and knowledge in the proposed area of research.

**17. Is the Lead researcher required to be attached to institutions of higher learning (IHLs)?**

Yes, but the research team members in professions other than academia are allowed to be part of the research team to complement the expertise and with the expectation that the product of the research will contribute to the wider body of knowledge on the topic specified.

**D. RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

**18. Can I submit the proposal in Bahasa Melayu?**

Yes, proposals in Bahasa Melayu are accepted.

**19. Can I submit more than one proposal?**

Yes, you can submit more than one proposal. However, researchers can only submit one proposal as the Lead Researcher and each researcher can act no more than twice as applicant.

**20. Is it advisable to include preliminary data?**

We do not have specific guidelines on this. We recommend adding it only if the proposer thinks it will give additional strength to the proposal.

**21. Would I be requested to present my proposal to the Technical Panel? How will I know if my proposal has been shortlisted?**

MCMC may request for the shortlisted proposals to be presented to the Technical Panel. Only shortlisted submissions will be contacted for this purpose.

**22. Is there a required format for the research proposal?**

Yes, it is available in the application form.

**23. Do I need to attach the full proposal together with proposal application form?**

The full proposal is part of the Proposal Submission Form. You are not required to attach a separate document.

**24. Do I need to get approval from ethics committee and attach the supporting documents with grant application?**

At the proposal stage, researchers are not required to obtain approval from ethics committee. The researchers only need to indicate that they take note of the ethical requirements for their projects.

**25. When will the project start?**

Tentatively in early May 2021.

**E. RESEARCH TITLE/FOCUS AREAS**

***i. General***

**26. What are the research focus areas?**

The research focus areas are 1) Digital Citizenship and Cyberwellness and 2) Digital Inclusion. Please refer to section 1.4 of the 2021 DSRG Guidelines for details.

**27. Do I need to strictly follow the given research title? Can I refine it as long as it is still aligned with the research title?**

For proposals under the open research category, candidates are requested to be guided by the suggested research titles. However, candidates may amend the original titles given insofar as to better clarify the requested research aims and objectives. Where necessary, the titles may also be refined to limit the scope of the study to reflect improved feasibility of the research project and alignment to MCMC research requirements.

**28. For guided research, should a proposal address all of the given research objectives? Or can I select the research objectives?**

As advised during the information session, where possible candidates are requested to address all the research objectives given. However, researchers are given the flexibility to select to limit, modify and if necessary to drop research objectives provided. However, the research objectives are identified according to MCMC knowledge requirements and all proposals will be evaluated on their relative merits and alignment to MCMC requirements.

**29. What is the difference between open research and guided research?**

As advised during the information session projects classified as open research are accompanied by a variety of research themes for which MCMC has general interest in understanding and sharing with identified stakeholders. Under the open research category researcher's may propose a suitable research title related to the general research area suggested.

**30. Please confirm that researchers are given the autonomy to determine research design and methodology.**

Yes, researchers may propose a suitable research design incorporating a proposed theoretical/conceptual framework, methodology and research instruments to address research aims and objectives that is feasible within the financial limits and identified research duration for the given research area or title.

**31. Does researcher have to address all the identified stakeholders identified?**

Where possible, yes. However, in order to ensure feasibility of the proposed study, researchers may include the basis for highlighting and selecting specific groups and the rationale for the exclusion of others. This will be taken into consideration during the evaluation process and in considering the proposal on its relative merits in relation to other proposals received.

**32. Do I have to follow any specific focus with regards to potential respondents of the research?**

Where a specific respondent group has been exclusively identified for the research, proposals must specifically address this group of respondent.

**33. As participants in the info session we were requested to indicate which title we were interested in. Can we select a different title for our submission?**

The initial information sought was intended to provide MCMC with a broad picture of potential research interests. You may select any of the proposed research areas and titles for submission of your proposal.

*ii. DCC2-Understanding the Behavioural Aspects of Cyberbullying and Interventions for Victims, Perpetrators, Parents and Stakeholders*

**34. How to align the theme with New Media as Beneficiary Department?**

Any research should focus to current online content issues, including but not limited to dis/misinformation (information disorder), hate speech, child online protection and cyberbullying.

**35. Is it possible for the researcher to have access to MCMC's database?**

Access to any information is subject to the types of data needed.

**36. Where and how can I get data or reports on cyberbullying?**

MCMC may assist in providing information on reports but it is limited. However, the relevant information can be obtained from other ministries/enforcement agencies, such as PDRM, MOH, and KPWKM, in order to obtain a holistic/overall view of the matter.

*iii. DCC3- Impact and Efficacy of Mandated Public Service Announcements*

**37. What is the definition of mandated PSA?**

A Public Service Announcement (PSA) is an information provided by the government on its policies, initiatives, and programs. The PSA can be in the form of video clips, radio messages, or SMS.

Meanwhile, the mandated PSA is a content developed by the Ministries (such as Ministry of Health, Communication & Multimedia Ministry or agencies (Bank Negara, MCMC or AADK) or can be produced by the stations themselves. Other types of PSA could be PSA developed by the station with a third party that does not fall under the mandated category.

**38. What kind of sample am I required to focus on?**

MCMC will share examples of PSA once the researcher(s) have been appointed, if needed.

**39. What are the expected outcomes?**

Generally, MCMC would like to understand the impact and effectiveness of the PSA on public and understand their preferred method of receiving such information. Please refer to appendix 2021 DSRG Research Titles of the 2021 DSRG Guidelines for details.

- 40. What would the channel of public service announcement be? Is there any app or platform that you are focusing on? Does it have to only be focused on COVID-19 or can it also be used as a platform to educate patients on the impact of being physically inactive?**

The PSA are disseminated on TV (all free-to-air channels, selected UNIFI and Astro channels), radio and SMS.

The PSA can be on different topics including COVID-19, economic assistance, fake news or scams, healthy living and education.

*iv. DCC4 – Understanding the Co-relationship between Internet and Mental Health*

- 41. What are the expected outcomes/deliverables and is there a focus on a specific group, inclusivity issue or is it open?**

Mental health issues are complex and solutions to such problems often require partnerships between practitioners and community members. As such what is sought are research that will provide the evidence to support recommendations that may be used to inform and develop programmes that favours collaboration in defining, exploring, and developing action-oriented solutions to community issues.

- 42. Does it have to be focused to one particular group of people, i.e. youths, senior citizens?**

It may be either general population or specific target groups such as young children or senior citizens.

- 43. Can we use secondary data? Is it acceptable to use secondary data that is older than 2017?**

Secondary data is acceptable and may even necessary to support a literature review however data must be as recent as possible so as to be relevant as well as potentially actionable for decision-making and adequately referenced.

- 44. The research objective seems general and does it need to be related to the use of technology?**

This theme seeks to understand the impact of digital technology use on the mental health of various groups in particular the surge of digital usage during the COVID-19 pandemic. Research is sought to study and address implications for research (adoption, consequences etc) and practice (policy, design etc).



v. ***DCC6- Challenges of Emerging Big Data Applications: Privacy Vs Security***

vi. ***DCC7- Managing Privacy in an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Enabled World***

**45. How to identify/ensure that this research area belongs to MCMC and not to the Office of Data Protection Commissioner? Tips on this is critical so the researcher does not deviate/infiltrate to the scope of other agencies.**

The research is from a user and provider perspective. While digitalisation is a transformation that is taking place widely across verticals, privacy and security is a concern for all entities. The researcher is requested to focus on the listed verticals i.e.: SmartCity, Manufacturing, Entertainment/ Media, Digital Healthcare, Tourism, Education.

vii. ***DI2- Study on Malaysia's Ecosystem Compatibility and Envisaged Technologies for 5G by Regulation and Standardization Bodies***

**46. What are the expected outcomes?**

The listed ROs in 2021 DSRG Guidelines shall be guided. Ultimately, the research is to identify what gaps are there in the ecosystem that is limiting (policy perspective) such tech to be deployed. Hence, we expect recommendations and suggestions on how this can be addressed and facilitated. As the ecosystem has various verticals, the researcher is requested to focus on the listed verticals i.e.: SmartCity, Manufacturing, Entertainment/ Media, Digital Healthcare, Tourism, Education

viii. ***DI3- Study on Sectoral Policy Readiness to Catalyse 5G Adoption in Malaysia***

**47. What is the focus of the research?**

As the ecosystem has various verticals, the researcher is requested to focus on the listed verticals i.e.: SmartCity, Manufacturing, Entertainment/ Media, Digital Healthcare, Tourism, Education.

**48. What is the target group of the research?**

The research is targeted towards potential players as well as sectoral policy makers in the 5G ecosystem.

RO1 is input from sectoral policy makers on their policy and/or plans

RO2 is input from potential players on their challenges

RO3 is to identify if there's any plans or policy that's in place (RO1) that could facilitate the challenges faced by the potential players (RO2)

- RO1 – Provide stocktake of various sectoral industry policy and/or plans to facilitate take ups of 5G services vis-à-vis identified industry verticals.
- RO2 – Identify challenges faced by potential players in order to take up of 5G services vis-à-vis identified industry verticals.
- RO 3 - Highlight opportunities that can be of advantage for industry players based on facilitations made available by sectoral policy makers according to their policies and plans in place.

***ix. DI-4– Internet Access and Accessibility: Challenges and Potential Interventions in Adopting the New Norms***

**49. What is the target group of the research?**

It may be either general population or specific target groups such as age, income, education, gender or geographic location.

***x. DI-5 An Impact Study of Pusat Internet Komuniti (PIK) and their Role in the Digital Inclusion of Community within the Pusat Perumahan Rakyat (PPR) Residences***

**50. What is the target group of the research?**

It shall cover PIK at PPR nationwide. The research sponsor will provide the list.

***xi. DI-6– An Impact Study of Klik Dengan Bijak (KDB)***

**51. What is the minimum number of respondents for this study?**

There is no minimum number of respondents. However, a good sample size will be considered in the selection criteria.

**F. TECHNICAL MEMBERS AND EVALUATION**

**52. Who are the Technical Panel members?**

The Technical Panel is a select panel of specialist and experts from academia and industry responsible for evaluation and selection of the award of DSRG. This panel is chaired by MCMC.

**G. OTHERS**

**53. What are the deliverables required?**

Research report and Manuscript.

**54. Does MCMC have the requirement for publication?**

Yes, we encourage the researchers to publish papers in peer reviewed journals

**H. CONTACT DETAILS**

**55. Is the applicant allowed to get in touch with the research sponsor during the proposal preparation?**

Yes, you may contact the research sponsor at [research.enterprise@mcmc.gov.my](mailto:research.enterprise@mcmc.gov.my).

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