HealthTEC
Singapore
Health Technologies Consortium

HEALTHTEC SEED GRANT GUIDELINES

Annex A

Version No: 1.2

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Introduction

Launched in July 2019, the Singapore Health Technologies Consortium (HealthTEC or the Consortium) offers a platform for interaction and collaboration between Industry and Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) to develop and translate disruptive technological innovations in **sensing technologies, analytics** and **artificial intelligence** for health and wellness personalised applications. The Consortium also acts as a national resource in R&D and commercialisation by providing seed funding and facilitating translation of technologies. HealthTEC is supported by the National Research Foundation (NRF) and hosted at the Institute for Health Innovation and Technology (iHealthtech), National University of Singapore (NUS).

All capitalized terms used herein and not otherwise defined in these Guidelines will have the meanings set out in the HealthTEC Consortium Agreement. ***Academic Members*** *refer to IHLs/RIs who signed up as Institutional Members and* ***Industry Members*** *refer to companies who signed up as Industry Full Members of the HealthTEC Consortium Agreement respectively.*

1. Objectives

1.1 To support IHLs-Industry collaborations in the areas of health sensing technologies and health analytics/AI that have high potential of industry adoption.

1.2 To support feasibility study that could potentially lead to larger scale IHL-Industry collaboration aimed at IHL IP adoption into HealthTEC Industry Member's product, which could tap on a larger grant such as the Industry Alignment Fund (IAF).

2. Overview of HealthTEC Seed Grant

2.1 The HealthTEC Seed Grant provides funding support for HealthTEC Academic Members to explore new innovative ideas and/or to translate technologies/know-how in collaborative projects with HealthTEC Industry Members.

2.2 Problem statement derived from an Industry Member will be developed into a project proposal co-created by both Academic Member and Industry Member, and be submitted by the Academic Member to HealthTEC for review by the HealthTEC evaluation panel (HEP).

2.3 The HealthTEC Seed Grant provides funding up to $50,000/project/year with some cash and/or in-kind contribution expected from an Industry Member. The details of the funding support is as follows.

HealthTEC Seed Grant: up to $50,000 cash/project/year
Industry Member: $10,000 cash* and/or in-kind

**Cash contribution from Industry Member is exclusive of any applicable Goods and Services Tax (GST) payable by the Industry Member thereon at the prevailing rates.*

3. Eligibility

3.1 The HealthTEC Seed Grant is open to all full-time faculty members of HealthTEC Academic Members with minimum time commitment of 9 months per year and who are not shareholders of the Industry Member. The faculty member will be the Lead Principal Investigator (PI) of the project and the corresponding Academic Member will be the host institution of the project who will receive and administer the funding ("Host Institution").

3.2 Each project must have an industry collaborator who is a HealthTEC Industry Member.

3.3 Proposals already funded by other government agencies would not be considered. PIs would need to declare their other funding sources during the application. Proposals with similar scope, which are currently under evaluation by other funding initiatives, would not be considered until the results from the other funding initiatives are finalised.

4. Funding Support and Duration

4.1 The HealthTEC Seed Grant supports up to $50,000 per project over a period of 1 year.

4.2 Only direct costs of the project are supportable. Direct costs are defined as the incremental cost required for executing the project. This excludes contributions in-kind, existing equipment and the cost of existing manpower as well as building cost. All expenditure for goods and services should be budgeted inclusive of any applicable GST at the prevailing rates. Overheads or indirect costs such as space, support personnel, administrative and facilities expenses are not supportable for the project.

4.3 Any direct cost charged to the grant must be reasonable and for the proposed activities of the project. Supportable direct costs can be classified into the following three cost categories:

a. Expenditure of manpower (EOM);

b. Expenditure on new equipment (EQPT);

c. Other operating expenses (OOE); and

d. Overseas travel (OT)

4.4 All EOM related expenses shall be pro-rated taking reference from the project start date, except for lump-sum insurance claims, which shall be allowable as claimed. In general, EOM of staff should be charged based on time commitment to the research. All Host Institutions must adhere to the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices.

4.5 The Investigators/Host Institutions shall ensure that the purchase of each equipment is necessary for the research and is not otherwise reasonably available and accessible. NRF may require the Investigators/Host Institutions to allow approved Third Parties to access and use the equipment, subject to the availability of the equipment.

4.6 It is the responsibility of the Investigators/Host Institutions to ensure that all travel expenses are in line with the Host Institutions' consistently applied policy on travel. The Institutions are to ensure that any travel undertaken is in relation to the research only and for no other purpose.

4.7 Please refer to **Appendix I** for the list of **Non-Fundable Direct Costs**. HealthTEC's decision on the funding support to be awarded for each project is final.

4.8 The funding or any part thereof shall not be channelled to collaborators or to fund research and development activities overseas.

4.9 As part of the requirement of the grant, contribution from Industry Member has to be committed to the project in cash and/or in-kind (examples include the salary of corporate scientists/staff, equipment, consumables committed to the collaboration).

5. Grant Call and Application Process

5.1 The grant call is open throughout the year with submission deadlines on 31 March and 31 August respectively.

5.2 Applicants can submit their proposals using the **HealthTEC Seed Grant Application Form** to healthtec@nus.edu.sg.

5.3 All proposals must identify a Lead PI, who is expected to be actively involved in the overall management of the project and who will be accountable for the project and its deliverables. All Co-PIs and collaborators listed as members of the research team are expected to be actively involved in the research activities of the project, even though this may be in varying degrees.

5.4 Proposals submitted should contain all relevant information required for a proper and complete evaluation of their merits without the need to revert to applicants for additional information. Relevant privileged or confidential information should be disclosed if necessary to help convey a better understanding of the proposed project. However, such information should be clearly marked as confidential in the proposal.

5.5 Lead PI should ensure that the direct costs submitted would not result in a total budget that exceeds the maximum funding quantum allowed for the grant.

5.6 All PIs must comply with their respective Host Institution's research ethics and integrity policy, and other approval requirements needed to carry out the project

5.7 Proposals will then be put through an evaluation process. The HEP will convene twice a year to evaluate the proposals and make recommendations on proposals to be awarded the grant based on the evaluation criteria under paragraph 6.1 below to the HealthTEC Steering Committee (SC).

5.8 Any decision made by the SC and the HEP on proposals to be awarded funding shall be final. Following approval by the SC, HealthTEC will inform the successful applicants.

5.9 Please refer to **Appendix II** on **HealthTEC Seed Grant Application Work Flow** for details.

6. Evaluation Criteria

6.1 Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

No.	Criteria	Weightage (%)	Guiding Remarks
1.	Commercialisation plan	40	• Plan for IP adoption and commercialization by Industry Member. • Whether the project addresses important scope of the technology development roadmap or productization plan. • The extent to which the Industry Member will be committed in deploying the technologies developed and executing the commercialisation plan.

2.	Project scope	30	• Relevance of project scope with the aims of the grant. • The extent to which the proposed idea is able to address the Industry Member's problem statement and its technical soundness. • Technology transfer (if any) from academia to industry and how the technology will be translated. • Deliverables and milestones to commensurate with expected impact and objectives, and budget.
3.	Innovativeness	15	• The extent to which the proposed idea/approach challenges existing paradigms and employs new methodologies, designs or concepts.
4.	Quality	15	• The extent to which the proposed idea and the research methodology are clearly explained and includes a compelling or well-defined outcome metric.

7. Award

7.1 Notification of awards in the form of a Letter of Award (LOA), will be sent to the Director of Research (or equivalent) for the respective Lead PIs' Host Institutions and copied to the Lead PI.

7.2 The LOA will include the following:
a. Form of Acceptance (FOA);
b. Approved Proposal;
c. Seed Grant Guidelines and Annexes; and
d. Terms and Conditions (T&Cs)

7.3 The Form of Acceptance must be acknowledged by all of the following:
a. Director of Research (or equivalent); and
b. Lead PI;
Electronic signatures for acknowledgement of the FOA is acceptable.

7.4 As the source of the grant is from NRF administered by HealthTEC, all awarded projects must comply with the NRF T&Cs accordingly. Upon acceptance of the grant, the PI and Host Institution are bound by the T&Cs in the LOA.

8. Research Collaboration Agreements (RCA)

8.1 The Host Institution shall enter into a Research Collaboration Agreement with the collaborating parties including the Industry Member before commencing any part of the project. The project shall start upon signing of the RCA and within **two (2) months** from the date of LOA.

8.2 The RCA shall include the terms and conditions of the collaboration, including but not limited to Intellectual Property Management as in paragraph 12 below. Please note that paragraph 12.6 and 12.8 as defined in the Consortium Agreement are mandatory and shall be included in all research collaboration agreements.

9. Disbursement of Funds

9.1 Disbursement of funds is on a half-yearly basis based on reimbursement. The Lead PIs should submit claims using the template provided with the Letter of Award.

9.2 Final claims/Final Statement of Account should be made within **three (3) months** from the date of completion of the project. The invoices for all claims must be dated before the project end date. HealthTEC will process the final claims only upon receipt of the certified consolidated statement of expenditure.

9.3 Claims for staff performance bonus should be submitted within **three (3) months** from the date of completion of the project. For Host Institutions that practise accrual of performance bonus, balance funds should either be returned or claimed within three (3) months if the pay-out comes after the end of the project. In instances where the end of the project term does not coincide with the regular annual appraisal cycle, the Institution(s) will be allowed to submit a final performance bonus of the research personnel, based on the prevailing human resource policies and pro-rated to the number of months of service from the last appraisal of such research personnel to the end of the project.

9.4 The Lead PI is required to monitor and ensure that expenses do not exceed the overall budget.

9.5 The Lead PI should not commit to any expenditure before receiving funding approval from HealthTEC or after the project end date, inclusive of any approved extension period.

9.6 Prudence should be exercised for all project costs, and expenditures claimed must comply with the Host Institutions' internal procurement processes, guidelines and policies.

9.7 HealthTEC reserves the right to reject any claims that have resulted from changes to research without prior approval from HealthTEC and items found not to be fundable, not necessary, not reasonable, not relevant or not used for the research.

10. Project Variation Requests

10.1 Types of variations:

i) Grant Variation within Categories

Changes within categories (i.e. changes in quantity and changes in items) can be approved by the Host Institution's Director of Research (or equivalent), provided that these changes are (i) necessary, relevant and used for the research; (ii) do not constitute a change in research; (iii) comply with the Host Institution's policies and not in the non-fundable list; and (iv) are kept within the approved equipment vote budget.

ii) Grant Variation across Categories

For virement of funds between the votes of cumulative amount not exceeding ten percent (10%) of the total project direct cost value, such variation can be approved by the Host Institution's Director of Research (or equivalent). For virements cumulatively above ten percent (10%), requests for such virement should be submitted to HealthTEC prior to incurring the expenditure and no later than **three (3) months** from the end of the project. Retrospective virement requests or late requests will not be allowed, unless there is compelling justification. Virement of funds into the overseas travel vote is not allowed.

iii) Project Extension

Requests for a project extension within approved budget should be submitted to HealthTEC at least **six (6) months** before the project's original end date. Any variation requests necessary to meet the extension period must be made known as part of the extension request. A one-off project extension should not be more than a total of six (6) months. An extension beyond six (6) months will require compelling justification.

iv) Change of Lead PI

If there are any anticipated changes to the Lead PI, the Host Institution will have to make the request to HealthTEC at least **six (6) months** before the change of Lead PI takes place. Approval from the HealthTEC Steering Committee (SC) will then be sought. In the event that the Host Institution cannot find any suitable person to fulfil this role, or that the nominated

individual is not approved by SC, SC reserves the right to terminate funding for the project.

v) Change in Host Institution

SC's approval will be required should there be a change in Host Institution. The request must be made to HealthTEC and be endorsed by the Director of Research (or equivalent) of both the existing and new Host Institutions.

vi) Change in Project Scope and Milestones/Deliverables

SC's approval will be required for any change(s) to the scope of the project. This includes change, removal or addition of scientific objectives, deliverables/milestones. If an activity/task initially meant to be carried out by the Investigators/Academic Members is subcontracted or entrusted to a third-party, this would also constitute a change in the project scope and SC's prior approval will be required.

10.2 The above variation requests except those that can be approved by the Host Institutions should be submitted to HealthTEC using the prescribed **Variation Form.**

11. Audit and Progress Reports

11.1 The Host Institution is required to submit a Periodic Audit Report, in accordance with the audit terms of reference which will be provided to the Host Institution.

11.2 Lead PI is required to submit an interim report within **one (1) month** from the end of the first 6 months of the project and subsequent 6 months (if project is extended) to HealthTEC using the prescribed **Mid-Term Report Template**.

11.3 Lead PI is also required to submit a final report within **two (2) months** following the project end date (inclusive of any approved extension period) to HealthTEC using the prescribed **Final Report Template**.

12. Intellectual Property Management

12.1 "Background IP" (or BIP) is defined as any existing IP brought by parties into a research collaboration funded by HealthTEC. "Foreground IP" (or FIP) is defined as new IP developed as a result of the research collaboration funded by HealthTEC.

(I) Background IP

12.2 All research collaborators involved in research projects funded by HealthTEC will grant each other free access to any BIP necessary for the purpose of carrying out the research collaboration to develop potential FIP during the term of the project. Exceptions to this may be made in cases where the BIP is already encumbered, e.g., where prior licensing or other arrangements prevent free access to other parties other than the IP owner, even for research

purposes only. However, in such instances the research team should assess whether the encumbered BIP is critical for developing and exploiting any potential FIP and make an informed decision on how to proceed with the intended collaboration.

12.3 No party is allowed to use, disclose or license another party's BIP, outside of the scope allowed for in paragraph 12.2 above, without the relevant BIP owner's approval.

12.4 The FIP owner or its designated commercialisation entity will request in writing to the BIP owner to provide information on any licence rights that may be available with respect to the BIP that would be necessary for the subsequent commercialisation of the FIP. If necessary for the subsequent commercialisation of FIP, the terms and conditions for the use of any BIP should be negotiated separately with the relevant BIP owner.

(II) Foreground IP

12.5 FIP shall be jointly owned as tenants in common in equal and undivided shares between the Host Institution of the researcher (whose research are funded by HealthTEC) and the research collaborator(s)' employer when both are listed as inventors or creators of the FIP. Any deviation from this arrangement will subject to negotiation between the collaborating parties in a written agreement.

12.6 Joint owners as determined in paragraph 12.5 above, shall make joint patent applications for protection of the FIP and determine commercialisation of the same. The FIP owner(s) shall inform HealthTEC of the filing of all patent applications to protect the FIP and any patents granted thereon within three (3) months of the relevant filing date(s) or grant date(s).

12.7 Each party shall be entitled to use any FIP for its internal, research, development, academic and non-commercial purposes including collaborative research projects carried out by it with any third party.

12.8 Each party shall grant to each Industry Member of HealthTEC as defined in the HealthTEC Consortium Agreement a non-exclusive, non-sublicensable, non-transferable, non-assignable, royalty-free, fully-paid up, worldwide right and license to its rights and interest in any FIP for the Industry Member's internal, research, development, academic and non-commercial purposes including collaborative research projects carried out by the Industry Member with any third party. Such licence rights shall be effective for the full duration of such Industry Member's Membership Period and for two (2) years thereafter.

12.9 The Singapore Government and public sector agencies shall reserve a non-exclusive, non-transferable, perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide, royalty-free right and licence to use, modify, reproduce and distribute the FIP for their statutory functions, non-commercial, R&D and/or educational purposes only.

(III) Disclosure Management and Publications

12.10 Each party shall promptly and fully disclose to the other party in writing any FIP that it may have developed in the course of the project and where such FIP may require protection, such disclosure shall be made in confidence.

12.11 At any time, during or after completion of the project, all collaborating parties should acknowledge the NRF for its funding support in any publication (including the internet) of any material based on or developed under the project. NRF support should also be acknowledged orally during all news and media interviews.

12.12 Where possible, the acknowledgement statement should follow:

"This research / project is supported by the National Research Foundation, Singapore, under the Singapore Heath Technologies Consortium (HealthTEC) Seed Grant (HealthTEC Seed Grant Award No) *[the HealthTEC Seed Grant award number given in the Letter of Award should be inserted here]"*.

If there is more than one funding source, the names of each source of funding are to be placed in order of the funding value.

12.13 Where applicable, the following disclaimer must be included in all published materials arising from the project:

"Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not reflect the views of National Research Foundation, Singapore and Singapore Heath Technologies Consortium".

13. Changes to Guidelines

13.1 The HealthTEC reserves the right to make changes to the Seed Grant Guidelines and any submission templates, as and when it deems fit.

For enquiries, please contact healthtec@nus.edu.sg

Appendix I

NON-FUNDABLE DIRECT COSTS

Type of Expenses	Description
Salaries of Lead PI / Investigators / Visiting Professors / Visiting Researchers / Collaborators / general administrative support staff	Not allowable.
Teaching buy outs	Not allowable for the hiring of substitutes to perform the Investigators' teaching duties.
Stipend top-up for existing post-graduate scholarship holders	Not allowable.
Undergraduate stipend and tuition support	Not allowable.
Costs related to general administration and management	Not allowable. This includes common office equipment, such as furniture and fittings, office software, photocopiers, scanners and office supplies.
Costs of office or laboratory space	Not allowable. This includes renovation/outfitting costs, rent, depreciation of buildings and equipment, and related expenditures such as water, electricity, general waste disposal and building/facilities maintenance charges.
Personal productivity tools & communication expenses	Not allowable, unless the use of mobile phones and other form of smart devices were indicated in the methodology for the Research.
Audit fees (Internal and external audit) and Legal fees	Not allowable.
Entertainment	Not allowable.
Refreshment	Not allowable, unless this is related to a hosted conference or workshop for the Research.
Fines and Penalties	Not allowable.
Patent Application	Not allowable. This includes patent application filing, maintenance and other related cost.
Professional Membership Fees	Not allowable.
Staff retreat and team-building activities	Not allowable.

Appendix II

HEALTHTEC SEED GRANT APPLICATION WORKFLOW