

# TRANSCRIPT OF LECTURE DELIVERED ON AUGUST 28, 2018

## THE HONG KONG PHD FELLOWSHIP SCHEME

Presented by:

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### Background

The Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme is one of the most competitive PhD scholarships in the world. Alongside, Hong Kong Varsities featured top-ranked in the world. They have gained excellent reputation for research and innovation in a wide range of disciplines making ones PhD a memorable one. Interestingly, most HK Universities follow the American style of education for its PhD programs.

### Selection Criteria

There is no particular algorithm to secure the HKPFS prior to one's ethnic background and work experience but a prospective candidate can increase his or her chance with good

- i. CV
- ii. Proposal
- iii. Good grades in previous degrees

Also, the steps to getting selected are mostly in three stages. These are as follows:

- i. Supervisor
- ii. Department (normally after Skype interview)
- iii. University's research office

- i. **Supervisor**

Considering a good number of candidates applying to be forwarded by let's say Prof A. The professor is given the chance to forward **three (3) candidates only** to the department for possible vetting and invitation for the Skype interview. Luckily, the **HKPFS** has two options (i.e. to choose two different professors) to provide greater chance for candidate to be picked out.

ii. **Department (normally after Skype interview)**

Each department has the maximum number of candidates they can submit for the **HKPFS** scheme and it therefore limits the number of students to be selected. After stage 2 (Skype interview), which is usually carried out in December every year, every invited and assessed candidate is scored and ranked.

Apart from the **HKPFS**, each department has internal funding for students who were expelled in the course of getting **HKPFS** but excelled in the interview. This scheme of almost same scale with **HKPFS** is called the **PhD studentship**. The subtle difference is the stipend (monthly allowance).

iii. **University's research office**

Let's say **Dept. Z** has just two places for the HKPFS and 7 places for PhD studentship, if **23 candidates** were invited for the Skype interview, then obviously **9 candidates** (2+7) will qualify for funding. The candidature of the top 2 will then be forwarded to the University's Research Office for onward submission to RGC (**Research Grants Council of the HKSAR government**). ***The ranking of the school of your previous degree has about 11 points or so out of the 120 points for assessment.***

One has greater chance to getting **HKPFS** if he/she has **peachy paper publications**. Anyway, PhD studentship which weighs better than any other PhD funding elsewhere in the world (monetary-wise) is also available when you mishit HKPFS.

Again, to ease your PhD application, you need to get a supervisor (advisable to be Associate/full Professor). But it is fractious to get HKPFS with an Assistant Professor as your supervisor.

Thankfully, apart from **PhD studentship**, there are other **company/industry-based project funding** for your PhD but you can only accessed it when you have a Professor. When contacting a professor for possible supervision, you need to attach your CV and indicate your research interest. **Transcripts** and **PhD proposals** are not necessary at this stage.

In mailing, ensure to indicate your professor that you intended to apply for the HKPFS and please consider your email content (**shouldn't be more than two short paragraphs**) else, hardly will someone read it. Also, the email subject should not be short and captivating as well. RGC: <https://cerg1.ugc.edu.hkpfs/index.html>

Universities in Hong Kong: <http://www.anshk.org/universities-in-hk/>

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**Que 1.** Can one apply to HKPFS without getting supervisor?

**Ans.** Not advisable... I haven't heard of one who secured the HKPFS without a supervisor but it works for studentship.

**Que 2.** If someone gets supervisor, is it compulsory the supervisor issue a formal letter of acceptance?

**Ans.** Email consent is enough

**Que 3.** At what point is research proposal a priority or how much weight has research proposal?

**Ans.** After consent of the Prof, your Prof should guide you in fine-tuning your proposal if he/she is interested in you.

**Que 4.** Can one apply with awaiting MSc result or without MSc?

**Ans.** Either awaiting MSc or no MSc but First Class BSc is permitted

**Que 5.** Can someone who is yet to take TOEFL apply for the scholarship?

**Ans.** Isn't compulsory if one is a citizen of an English speaking country or was taught in English at his formal university

## **A Sample of E mail Consent**

Email subject: Consent as PhD Supervisor for HKPFS scholarship application

(You can modify the above as you may like)

I hereby use this medium to request your consent as my PhD Chief Supervisor for the HKPFS fellowship scheme.... I have checked your web profile... and I see some of your previous works or papers align with my research interests...

I have a BSc and/or MSc (mention the grades)....My current research interests are.....etc\_

Regards,

Your name.

**Note the following:**

Application opens September till the end of the year. Some if not all have an application fees (**it always drive some people away from this offer**) but it's not that expensive.

The toughest stage to help secure HFKPFS is getting a prospective supervisor. So it's best you start now! You can begin a search for one even if you are not applying this year.

Log in to <https://cerg1.ugc.edu.hk/hkpfs/apply.html> and screen through the list of universities available to select the universities of your interest (you can apply for at most 2 schools).

Check the department that suits you. Be noted, some schools use a broader name for their dept. For instance, I am a statistics student but in the Department of Systems Eng. and Eng. Management.

Go through their lecturers' profile to see whether their interest synchronizes with your own

Send them email, explaining who you are, what you actually want, what you have done before and what you intend doing now. Attach your transcript, CV and list/link of your publications if you have for it's what interest them most. (Content should be simple and not lengthy)

**Edited by: Scholar Michael Frimpong.**