MALAYSIAN COMMUNICATIONS AND MULTIMEDIA COMMISSION

DSRG
DIGITAL SOCIETY RESEARCH GRANT

DSRG 2024, CYCLE 1 - CALL FOR PROPOSALS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

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A.   ABOUT DSRG

1.   What is the Digital Society Research Grant (DSRG)?
The DSRG was launched on 3 July 2020 to grow broader evidence-based research studies with a shorter time frame bearing current data. The value of each grant is limited to a maximum of Malaysian Ringgit ten thousand (RM10,000) for research activities no longer than six (6) months unless stated otherwise.

2.   What is the objective of the DSRG?
This grant aims to grow the evidence base necessary for the nation to optimise the advancements made in communications infrastructure and service deployment. This base will assist the development of policy, programmes, and interventions in promoting the inclusion and participation of all population segments as the nation transitions towards being a fully digitally connected and informed society.

B.   APPLICATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

3.   Who is eligible to apply?
The grant is open to full-time academicians and researchers in the school of communications, social sciences, humanities, or related fields of private and public higher educational institutions (HEIs). Each proposal must have a Lead Researcher, subjected to the general terms and conditions for granting. For details, please refer to Section 2.1 of the DSRG 2024 Cycle 1 Application Guideline.

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?
The application period is from **Friday, 1 March 2024, until Monday, 1 April 2024 (no later than 5:00 pm).** Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered.

6.   How to submit my application?
You may submit the electronic copy of your proposal(s) and other supporting documents to the Secretariat via email, addressed to dsrg@mcmc.gov.my with '**DSRG 2024 Cycle 1 Research Proposal'** as the subject line. Hard copies are not required.

7.   Can I apply directly, or must I go through my university?
You may submit the proposal directly to us. However, if the university requires, we allow applicants to submit through their respective universities.

8. **I have an existing grant from my HEI/other organisations and would like to apply for a supplemental grant. Am I eligible?**
No, the MCMC will not consider supplementing existing grants.

9. **My proposal was unsuccessful in the previous round of Call For Proposal, are re-submissions allowed?**
Yes, re-submission of the same proposal is allowed. However, the applicant is strongly encouraged to re-apply with a revised or improved proposal according to the priority focus areas and meet the eligibility criteria and requirements of the current Call.

10. **I missed the submission deadline. Can I still submit my proposal?**
Any submissions submitted after the closing date will not be considered.

11. **How would I know if the Secretariat has received my application?**
An acknowledgement receipt will be sent once the Secretariat has received the proposal. Those who have submitted the proposal(s) and have NOT received any email confirmation within a week should contact the Secretariat by emailing dsrg@mcmc.gov.my or calling 03-8688 8263/ 8470/ 8497/ 7854 (office hours only).

C. QUALIFICATION, LEAD RESEARCHER AND RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS

12. **Are the research team members' curriculum vitae (CV) required?**
Yes, the CVs of all research team members are a critical element of the submission requirement.

13. **Do I need to submit my PhD certificate?**
Yes, you only need to 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 qualifications?**
Yes, the verified copies of all team members' highest academic qualification certificates must be submitted.

15. **Who can verify 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 the Lead Researcher is to provide strategic direction to the research project and liaise with MCMC. Thus, it is recommended that the Lead Researcher has the expertise, skills and knowledge in the proposed area of research.

17. Is the Lead Researcher required to be attached to a HEI?

Yes, it is required for a Lead Researcher to be attached to a HEI. However, research team members in professions other than academia are allowed to be part of the research team to complement the expertise and expect that the research product will contribute to the broader body of knowledge on the specified topic.

D.   RESEARCH PROPOSAL

18. Can I submit the proposal in Malay?

Yes, proposal(s) in Malay are accepted. However, the Project Manuscript must be submitted in English if the Lead Researcher qualifies for the award.

19. Can I submit more than one (1) proposal?

Yes, you can submit more than one (1) proposal. However, the applicant can only submit one (1) proposal in the Lead Researcher capacity and two (2) proposals in the team member capacity.

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 strengthen the proposal.

21. Would I be requested to present my proposal to the Technical Panel? How will I know if my proposal(s) have been shortlisted?

MCMC may request the shortlisted proposals be presented to the Technical Panel, and only those shortlisted submissions will be notified for this purpose.

22. Do I need approval from the ethics committee and attach the supporting documents with the grant application?

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

23. When will the project start?

The project must commence within two (2) weeks of signing the Letter of Award (LOA) and stamping[1] the same. For DSRG 2024, Cycle 1, the project is expected to commence tentatively in June 2024.

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[1] Stamping will be performed by MCMC.

E.   RESEARCH TITLE/FOCUS AREAS

24.   What are the research focus areas?
The research focus areas are Digital Citizenship and Cyberwellness, and Digital Inclusion. For more details, please refer to Appendix 1 of the DSRG 2024, Cycle 1 Application Guideline.

25.   What is the difference between open research and guided research?
Open research involves exploring a topic without predefined Research Objectives (ROs) / Research questions (RQs) or specific outcomes in mind, and the researcher is free to suggest ROs & RQs.
Guided research, on the other hand, is a more structured approach, where MCMC has a specific set of ROs/RQs that the researcher needs to address.

26.   Do I need to follow the given research title strictly? Can I refine it as long as it aligns with the research title?
For proposals under the guided research category, you are requested to be guided by the suggested research titles. However, you may amend the original titles to clarify the requested research aims and objectives better. Where necessary, the titles may also be refined to limit the scope of the study to reflect the improved feasibility of the research project and alignment with MCMC research requirements.

27.   Should a proposal address all the given ROs for guided research? Or can I select the ROs?
As advised during the information session, you are requested to address all the ROs. However, you are given the flexibility to select, limit, modify, and, if necessary, drop the ROs provided. However, the ROs are identified according to MCMC knowledge requirements, and all proposals will be evaluated on their relative merits and alignment with MCMC requirements.

28.   Are the applicants given the autonomy to determine the research design and methodology?
Yes, the applicants may propose a suitable research design incorporating a proposed theoretical/conceptual framework, methodology, and research instruments to address research aims and objectives that are feasible within the financial limits and identified research duration for the given research area or title.

29. **Do the applicants have to address all the identified stakeholders?**
Yes, where possible. However, to ensure the feasibility of the proposed study, applicants may include the basis for highlighting and selecting specific groups and the rationale for excluding others. This basis will be considered while evaluating the proposal's relative merits with other proposals received.

30. **Do I have to follow any specific focus regarding potential research respondents?**
Where a specific respondent group has been exclusively identified for the research, proposals must specifically address this respondent group.

F.   TECHNICAL MEMBERS AND EVALUATION

31. **Who are the Technical Panel members?**
The Technical Panel consists of select specialists and experts from academia or industry who are responsible for evaluating and selecting the award of DSRG. MCMC chairs the Panel.

G.   OTHERS

32. **What are the deliverables required?**
The main deliverables are the Interim Report, Research Report, and Project Manuscript. For other supporting deliverables, details can be referred to in Section 3 of the DSRG 2024, Cycle 1 Application Guideline.

33. **Does MCMC have a requirement for the researchers to publish their research findings in any external publication platform i.e., Scopus?**
Yes, we encourage researchers to publish their research findings in peer-reviewed journals. The Researcher shall submit a written notification to the Secretariat prior to the publication.

34. **Does MCMC have a requirement for the researchers to present the research findings at any international conference?**
Yes, we encourage researchers to present their research findings at any international conference. The Researcher shall submit a written notification to the Secretariat prior to the presentation.

35. **Do we need to hire a proofreader for our research report?**
Yes, we encourage researchers to hire a proofreader to ensure the consistency and quality of the write-up in the report.

36. **Can the applicant contact the research sponsor during the proposal preparation?**
Yes, you may contact the research sponsor via email, which is shared in Appendix 1 of the DSRG 2024, Cycle 1 Application Guideline.

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