



**Technology Talent Scheme – “Postdoctoral Hub” Programme
for Incubatees and Innovation and Technology Tenants of the
Hong Kong Science & Technology Parks Corporation and
Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited
Application Guide**

To nurture and bring together more technology talent and encourage them to pursue a career in innovation and scientific research, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) launched the “Postdoctoral Hub” programme under the Technology Talent Scheme in August 2018. The programme provides organisations undertaking Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) projects (“PH-ITF”) as well as incubatees and innovation and technology (I&T) tenants of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited (Cyberport) (“PH-SPC”) with funding support for the recruitment of postdoctoral talent to conduct research and development (R&D) work. This Guide sets out the details of the PH-SPC.

1. Eligibility

Applicant Company

Incubatees and I&T tenants¹ of HKSTPC and Cyberport, with incubation/tenancy duration covering the proposed engagement period, are eligible to apply for funding to recruit postdoctoral talent to assist in R&D projects in their companies. The applicant company should state in the application the scientific/engineering R&D element of which the project is to study and investigate and also describe the project duties to be assigned to the postdoctoral talent.

¹ The core business activities of the applicant company should be technology-intensive and innovation-based. The applicant company’s operations should not be primarily in mass production, although small scale pilot production or high value-added production in support of product and market development and innovation may be permitted.

This programme is also applicable to tenants of the Healthcare Devices Innovation Hub (HDIH), Biomedical Technology Support Center (BSC) and ICT Co-working Center of HKSTPC and Smart-Space of Cyberport. However, those tenants must fulfill the following additional conditions to be eligible for this programme:

- (a) the applicant company must have a remaining lease term/tenancy period of at least 9 months with HKSTPC/Cyberport at the time of application which should cover the engagement period;
- (b) the applicant company must have a fixed office room/space with dedicated workstation(s) for the postdoctoral talent. Floating seats, including the Flexi-Space of Cyberport, will not be accepted;
- (c) the applicant company must provide a declaration that the postdoctoral talent will be allocated with a dedicated workstation or a fixed seat inside an office room;
- (d) detailed checking will be carried out by HKSTPC/Cyberport at the beginning and at the end of the engagement period, with one or two pre-arranged visits in between; and
- (e) the applicant company must provide their postdoctoral talent training plan, and progress evaluation form for HKSTPC/Cyberport and ITC to understand better how the postdoctoral talent has been doing the tasks assigned and whether the job is R&D-related.

Postdoctoral Talent

To qualify for the “Postdoctoral Hub” programme, the candidate must be legally permitted to work in Hong Kong; and in possession of a doctoral degree of STEM²-related discipline obtained from a local university. For candidate with relevant qualification obtained from non-local institution, the candidate is eligible to participate in the PH-SPC if the qualification awarding institution is among the top 100 institutions for STEM-related subjects in the *latest publication* of any of the following world university ranking tables:

Ranking Tables	STEM-related subjects
Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Engineering and Technology- Life Science and Medicine- Natural Sciences
Shanghai Jiao Tong University	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Life and Agriculture Sciences (LIFE)- Natural Sciences and Mathematics (SCI)- Engineering/Technology and Computer Sciences (ENG)- Clinical Medicine and Pharmacy (MED)
Times Higher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Engineering and Technology- Computer Science- Life Sciences- Physical Sciences- Clinical, Pre-clinical and Health

For qualification obtained from other non-local institution, the candidate should provide relevant document(s), such as the qualification assessment report issued by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), supporting that the specific skills possessed by the candidate or the equivalence of the qualification concerned being assessed is on the doctoral level for consideration. The proprietor, partner or shareholder of the applicant company is not eligible to be engaged as a postdoctoral talent under the programme.

The postdoctoral talent should be a graduate³ in the relevant field of the research project to which he/she is to be recruited.

The applicant company and the postdoctoral talent shall not be receiving other employment subsidies provided by any other local public funding for the subject engagement under application.

2. Engagement Period

² STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

³ The graduate should have successfully completed the doctoral programme.

In order for the postdoctoral talent to contribute meaningfully to the R&D project, the engagement period for the candidate should be **no less than 6 months**; and should not overlap with the engagement period, if any, under the PH-ITF or the internship period, if any, under the Internship Programme (i.e. IP-ITF and IP-SPC). Upon completion of the engagement in an applicant company, the postdoctoral talent may be engaged again under the PH-ITF and PH-SPC. Unless otherwise approved by ITC, **the total engagement period for a postdoctoral talent under the ‘Postdoctoral Hub’ programme viz. PH-ITF and PH-SPC should not be more than 24 months in total.** Two postdoctoral talent can be recruited at any one time to assist in the R&D work of an applicant company. The total engagement period for an applicant company should be no more than 48 months. In case the postdoctoral talent recruited for a project resigns/leaves, the applicant company can recruit another talent as replacement during the incubation/tenancy period.

3. Application Procedure

Applicant companies should register for the purpose of the PH-SPC through the Innovation and Technology Commission Funding Administrative System (ITCFAS) at the ITF website (<https://itcfas.itf.gov.hk>). For each selected postdoctoral talent, the applicant company should submit a separate application via ITCFAS. New application should be submitted for engagement of an additional/replacement postdoctoral talent, or for transferring an approved talent to another company. The applicant company should also provide certified copies of the following supporting documents:

- (a) Incubation/tenancy contract of the applicant company;
- (b) Business registration certificate of the applicant company;
- (c) Qualification document of the postdoctoral talent;
- (d) Recruitment advertisement for the postdoctoral talent; and
- (e) Declaration that the postdoctoral talent will be allocated with a dedicated workstation or a fixed seat inside an office room (only applicable for tenants of HDIH/BSC/ICT Co-working Center of HKSTPC and Smart-Space of Cyberport).

On receipt of a complete application, ITCFAS will notify HKSTPC and Cyberport for conducting of preliminary vetting (e.g. to confirm incubation/tenancy status and eligibility under the PH-SPC). The applicant company will be notified if an application is not recommended for processing by ITC. Applications recommended by HKSTPC and Cyberport will continue to be processed by ITC. ITC reserves the right to decline acceptance of any recommended applications at any time at its sole discretion. Subject to approval by ITC, the applicant company can proceed with the formal recruitment of the postdoctoral talent.

Once the application is approved by ITC, the applicant company should comply with the conditions of funding as set out in this Guide throughout the engagement period, and keep relevant records for the engagement as required in section 7 below. The ITC and the recommending organisation (i.e. HKSTPC or Cyberport) reserve at all times the right to seek or collect additional information (e.g. postdoctoral talent’s attendance records) from the applicant company and the selected postdoctoral talent to substantiate and process the application, and monitor the approved application where necessary.

4. Remuneration for Postdoctoral Talent

A maximum monthly allowance of HK\$32,000 plus the employer's contribution to the Mandatory Provident Fund (i.e. HK\$1,500 maximum) for each postdoctoral talent will be provided. The monthly allowance shall be paid in full towards the actual lump sum monthly remuneration for the postdoctoral talent and shall not, in whole or in part, be retained by the applicant company for whatever reasons. No other allowances, overhead or fringe benefits etc. will be payable from the ITF. The monthly allowance will be provided to the applicant company on a reimbursement basis after acceptance of the progress report by ITC (i.e. on a half-yearly basis in general) as detailed in section 7 below.

5. Role of Applicant Company

The applicant company should:

- ensure that the postdoctoral talent selection process is fair and without prejudice to any candidates;
- ensure that the postdoctoral talent is suitably guided by a supervisor, to whom the talent can report or consult on a daily basis;
- assign to the postdoctoral talent relevant R&D duties (not secretarial or administrative duties) and with an appropriate level of workload which warrants a full-time employment;
- comply with the relevant legislative requirements concerning the employment of the postdoctoral talent including the relevant entry/visa requirements for non-local talent; and
- provide a safe working environment and arrange a proper workplace for the postdoctoral talent.

6. Role of Postdoctoral Talent

The postdoctoral talent being recruited should assist in the R&D work of the applicant company on a full-time basis.

7. Reporting Requirement

The applicant company is required to submit progress report(s), signed by both the programme coordinator and the postdoctoral talent on a half-yearly basis in general throughout the engagement period. HKSTPC and Cyberport will conduct vetting of the report and recommend acceptance of it by ITC. In this connection, HKSTPC and Cyberport will visit and interview the applicant companies and postdoctoral talent from time to time during the engagement period for monitoring purposes.

Both the applicant company and the postdoctoral talent are required to submit evaluation reports to ITC within one month from the completion or termination of the engagement for which the postdoctoral talent is recruited. In case of resignation of the postdoctoral talent during the approved engagement period or if the applicant company intends to terminate the engagement, the applicant company should report such to the ITC immediately. The applicant company is also required to keep the relevant financial documents (e.g. copies of cheques issued to the postdoctoral talent, payroll sheets, or certified receipts signed by the postdoctoral talent etc.) for seven years after completion/termination of the engagement, and submit to ITC

on request at any time during this period.

8. Handling of Information

Information provided by the applicant company in its application and progress/evaluation reports will be kept in confidence. It may however be disclosed to the recommending organisation (i.e. HKSTPC or Cyberport) and relevant parties to process the application, to conduct research and survey, and if the application is successful, to monitor the engagement, to exercise the Government's rights, and for other related purposes.

9. Important Notes

Inaccurate and incomplete information may affect the consideration and processing of the applications and may result in deferral or rejection. Applicant companies should note that any misrepresentation or omission of information in the applications or progress/evaluation reports may lead to rejection of the applications and/or full recovery of the monthly allowances already granted by the ITC, and possible court proceedings.

The ITC reserves at all times the absolute right to review all applications and adjust the ITF approved as necessary. In the event that there is an overpayment due to error in calculation or assessment, applicant companies are required to refund the amount overpaid within one month upon notification.

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