

Hester Cheung Memorial Young Colorectal Fellow Travelling Grant

****Policy Document****

1. Introduction

1.1 The “Hester Cheung Memorial Young Colorectal Fellow Travelling Grant” (“the Grant”) is established by the Hong Kong Society for Coloproctology (“the Society”) under the Hester Cheung Memorial Fund (“the Fund”) to honour the contribution of the late Dr Hester Cheung to colorectal surgery and to support the development of young colorectal surgeons in Hong Kong.

1.2 This Policy sets out the objectives, funding arrangements, eligibility criteria, application procedures, selection mechanism and obligations of awardees under the Grant.

2. Fund and financial arrangements

2.1 The Grant is supported by the Hester Cheung Memorial Fund, with a current capital of approximately HKD 1,000,000.

2.2 The Fund shall be held in a dedicated account under the Society and managed in accordance with the Society's financial regulations and all applicable laws in Hong Kong.

2.3 The Council of the Society ("the Council") will determine the annual budget available for the Grant, taking into account the fund balance and inflation. As a general guideline, the annual expenditure on the Grant shall normally be in the range of within HKD 70,000 subject to periodic review.

2.4 Any unspent balance in a given year shall remain within the Fund for future use. The Council may revise the number and value of awards from time to time with regard to the financial position of the Fund.

3. Objectives of the Grant

3.1 The Grant aims to:

- Support young colorectal fellows practising in Hong Kong to undertake clinical observerships/visiting fellowships in colorectal surgery.
- Enhance their clinical, technical, academic and professional development.
- Facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills back to Hong Kong, thereby improving the standard of colorectal care and training locally.

4. Scope of support

4.1 The Grant may be used to support:

- Attendance at recognised international or regional scientific meetings or postgraduate courses in colorectal surgery or closely related fields.
- overseas clinical observerships or visiting fellowships in accredited colorectal units, duration at least more than 2 weeks

4.2 The Grant may cover, in full or in part:

- Economy class airfare.
- Registration fees for conferences or courses.
- Accommodation and reasonable local transport expenses.
- Other directly related educational expenses as approved by the Selection Committee.

4.3 The Grant shall not be used to support routine clinical work, non-educational travel, or personal expenses unrelated to the approved activity.

5. Eligibility

5.1 Applicants must:

- Be registered medical practitioners currently practising in Hong Kong.
- Have completed specialist training in general surgery and be undergoing, or within five (5) years of completing, recognised colorectal subspecialty training or colorectal fellowship.
- Be current members of the Hong Kong Society for Coloproctology in good standing for at least twelve (12) months prior to the application deadline.
- Intend to remain in active colorectal practice in Hong Kong for the foreseeable future.

5.2 Preference will normally be given to applicants who:

- Have an accepted abstract or invited presentation at the intended meeting, or
- Have a confirmed invitation from the host unit for an observership / visiting fellowship.
- Have not previously received the Hester Cheung Memorial Young Colorectal Fellow Travelling Grant.

5.3 The Council reserves the right to declare certain categories of applicants ineligible (for example, members of the Selection Committee) in order to avoid conflicts of interest.

6. Number and value of awards

6.1 Subject to available funds, the Society will normally confer up to two (2) awards per calendar year.

6.2 The maximum value of each award shall normally be HKD 70,000. The exact award amount for each successful applicant will be determined based on the submitted budget and the available annual funds.

6.3 No individual shall receive the Grant more than once within a period of three (3) years.

7. Application procedures

7.1 Calls for applications will normally be issued once per year, with application deadlines around 30th September, or such other dates as may be announced on the Society's website and/or by circular to members.

7.2 Applicants must submit the following by the specified deadline:

- A completed application form (in the prescribed format) which will be available for download on society official website
- Curriculum vitae (maximum three pages).
- A description of the proposed activity (maximum two pages), stating objectives, relevance to colorectal surgery, and anticipated benefits to the applicant and to colorectal practice in Hong Kong.
- A detailed budget estimate (airfare, accommodation, registration and other anticipated costs).
- Evidence of abstract acceptance, registration, or invitation from the host institution, if available.
- One reference letter from the Head of Department, training supervisor or equivalent.
- Completed application form should be submitted to the correspondence address of the society through mail

7.3 Late or incomplete applications may not be considered.

8. Selection and approval

8.1 A “Hester Cheung Memorial Travelling Grant Selection Committee” (“the Committee”) shall be appointed by the Council. The Committee will normally consist of three members from the Council. President of the society will be the permanent member of the selection committee. If special circumstances arise, Council can appoint additional members to selection committee.

8.2 The Committee shall assess applications according to criteria including (but not limited to):

- Relevance and quality of the proposed activity.
- Applicant’s professional track record and potential.
- Clarity of educational objectives and anticipated benefits to Hong Kong.
- Realism and appropriateness of the budget.
- Fair distribution of opportunities among institutions and individuals.

8.3 The Committee will make recommendations to the Council for endorsement. The Council’s decision shall be final.

8.4 The Society reserves the right not to make an award in any given round or year if there are no suitable applications.

9. Disbursement of funds

9.1 Awardees will be notified in writing and required to confirm acceptance of the award and agreement to the terms and conditions of the Grant.

9.2 The Grant will normally be disbursed on a reimbursement basis upon submission of original receipts and proof of attendance (for example, certificate of attendance, boarding passes, or equivalent evidence).

9.3 Any substantial change in travel plan (including dates, destination, or nature of the activity) must be approved in advance by the Committee. Failure to obtain prior approval may result in withdrawal or reduction of the award.

10. Reporting and obligations of awardees

10.1 Within two (2) months after completion of the funded activity, the awardee must submit a written report (normally one to two pages) to the Society summarising:

- The activities undertaken.
- Key learning points and skills acquired.
- How the experience will influence their clinical practice, teaching or service development in Hong Kong.

10.2 Awardees will be invited, and may be required, to present a brief "Travelling Fellow Report" at a scientific meeting, annual general meeting or educational event organised by the Society.

10.3 Awardees must acknowledge the support of the "Hester Cheung Memorial Young Colorectal Fellow Travelling Grant, Hong Kong Society for Coloproctology" in any presentations or publications arising from the funded activity.

11. Conflict of interest and ethics

11.1 Applicants must declare any actual or potential conflict of interest in their application (for example, a close personal or supervisory relationship with a member of the Committee).

11.2 Committee members with a conflict of interest in relation to an application shall abstain from the deliberation and decision-making for that application.

11.3 Awardees are expected to uphold high professional and ethical standards during their funded activity and to comply with all applicable laws and regulations of the host country and of Hong Kong.

12. Review and amendment of the Policy

12.1 This Policy shall be reviewed by the Council at least once every three (3) years, or earlier if necessary, having regard to experience with the Grant, feedback from members, and the financial position of the Fund.

12.2 The Council may amend this Policy from time to time. Any material changes will be communicated to members and reflected in subsequent calls for applications.