

**THE 2026 SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH THEMATIC GRANT****Request for Proposal**

---

**1. INTRODUCTION**

---

- 1.1. The Social Science and Humanities Research Thematic Grant (the SSHR-TG) is one of the key initiatives of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). It aims to encourage high-quality and impactful social science and humanities research in areas of strategic relevance to Singapore. It supports social science and humanities research projects with bearing on key societal and economic issues affecting Singapore and the region. It aims to catalyse collaborations among existing research performers in Singapore, and encourage the effective use and adoption of innovative and inter-disciplinary methodologies, techniques and approaches. It also aims to support pathways to impact, including the test-bedding of ideas arising from research. Specific themes of focus for this grant call are set out below.

**2. THEMATIC FOCUS**

---

- 2.1. The 2026 SSHR-TG call invites proposals which address the following themes using various perspectives in the social sciences and humanities<sup>1</sup>, with special focus on understanding Singapore and its place in the region (ASEAN and the rest of Asia):

**Theme 1: The Future of Society**

Understanding issues relating to culture, society and community in the face of challenges arising from evolving local and global, social and political dynamics, population trends, as well as technological and economic shifts in work and lifestyles.

**Theme 2: The Future Economy**

Understanding how governments, firms and the workforce can be resilient to or take advantage of structural shifts in the global, regional and local economies, and evolving geopolitical, social, technological and economic trends.

**Theme 3: Climate Change and the Environment**

Understanding how economic activities and individual/collective behaviour affect climate change and other emerging environmental changes, the impact of such changes on social and economic life, and the regulatory, governance and behavioural measures that could be taken by governments, enterprises and communities to address them.

---

<sup>1</sup> This would include studies informed by a range of disciplines such as anthropology, cultural studies, economics, history, language studies, literature, law, philosophy, political science and sociology.

**Theme 4: The Human Condition**

Understanding issues relating to the human experience, values, philosophies, histories and cultures of Singapore and/or the region, including how these may have evolved over time and shape contemporary society.

**Theme 5. The Geopolitics of a Changing World**

Understanding how geopolitical developments impact the stability, security, development and cohesion of Singapore and/or the region.

**3. OPEN CATEGORY**

---

This category is open to any topics of interest, in particular to Singapore and the region, that are not covered by Themes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 and approach them from various perspectives in the social sciences and humanities.

---

Applicants are strongly encouraged to undertake empirical studies that can provide rigorous and relevant evidence to inform judgment and decision making in the public, private, and people sectors.

Where appropriate, applicants are encouraged to incorporate the following in their proposals:

- a) Clearly demonstrate how their projects will make a substantive scientific/academic contribution (e.g., theoretical, methodological, and empirical contributions to the research literature).
- b) Explain how the research questions are adequately addressed through data collection and analyses. These can be via established methods in the social sciences and humanities and/or newer methods employing recent advances in information technology, data analytics, artificial intelligence, computational social sciences and digital humanities.
- c) Relate the subject of study to Singapore's historical and socio-cultural contexts where relevant, or compare and relate local issues with trends and dynamics in other countries in the region or the world.
- d) Collaborate closely with potential users to foster the effective translation of research for society, policy or private sector impact.

**4. FUNDING**

---

- 4.1. There are three types of the SSHR-TG available, for which budget caps include 30% Indirect Research Cost and Research Scholarship.

4.1.1. **Type A (S\$100,000 to S\$1.5 million for up to 3 years per project).** This aims to support smaller-scale investigator-led research in areas of strategic relevance.

4.1.2. **Type B (>S\$1.5 million to S\$5 million over 3 to 5 years per project).**

4.1.3. **Type C (>S\$5 million to S\$10 million over 3 to 5 years per project).**

Both Type B and Type C aim to support research programmes that are more ambitious, inter-disciplinary and focus on issues of cross-cutting interest.

## 5. ELIGIBILITY

---

5.1. PIs and co-PIs must hold a primary/joint appointment(s)<sup>2</sup> in the eligible Host Institution(s) and/or Partner Institution(s) at the time of the application, as well as during the entire project duration<sup>3</sup>.

5.2. All Host Institutions with PIs applying for the SSHR-TG must designate a Director of Research (or equivalent) who must be registered with MOE. The office of the Director of Research will have the following responsibilities to MOE with respect to all applications and/or funded projects of that Host Institution under the Thematic Grant:

5.2.1. To undertake, in endorsing its PIs' applications, that the Host Institution:

5.2.1.1. Supports the grant application, has no objection to the project being undertaken in its premises and is committed to fully supporting the PI's project (such as making provisions for the PI's salary over the duration of the project<sup>4</sup>, as well as providing other support outside of the direct research costs of the proposed project for which SSHR-TG funding is being sought) to ensure its success if it is funded;

5.2.1.2. Has confidence that the proposed research team has the necessary competencies and track record to bring about the successful completion of the proposed project; and

5.2.1.3. Has the resources and infrastructure to effectively carry out such operational processes as may be necessary for the administration of any grants received, including the management of funds, asset inventories, collation of project reports, etc.

---

<sup>2</sup> There should be a minimum time commitment of 9 months, per calendar year, in these institutions.

<sup>3</sup> PIs and Co-PIs who are awarded grants must continue to meet this criterion throughout the project period. Should such PIs/Co-PIs be on no pay leave (or not serve duties at the institution) for more than 3 months in a Calendar Year during the project, they will no longer be eligible for the grant for that Calendar Year.

<sup>4</sup> If there are plans for the PI to leave the Host Institution during the project, the application should include a 1-page note, endorsed by the Director of Research, outlining the contingency/succession plan, e.g. who will then take over the project when the original PI leaves.

- 5.3. The SSHR-TG allows for joint submission from eligible Host Institutions, subject to the eligibility of the applicants.

Organisations that are eligible to apply for and receive the SSHR-TG may work in partnership or collaboration with any other organisation locally or overseas, subject to the conditions of the SSHR-TG.

- 5.4. Unless expressly allowed by MOE, the funds or any part thereof shall not be channelled to fund research and development activities overseas. Expenditure on overseas fieldwork must be specifically provided for in the research proposal and approved as part of the grant.

## 6. EVALUATION GUIDELINES

---

- 6.1. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following considerations:

6.1.1. Academic Merit: Scientific and intellectual rigour, potential to create new and important knowledge, and quality of research design and methods. The effective use of innovative, novel and inter-disciplinary approaches that draw on new qualitative and quantitative tools not necessarily confined to traditional social science methods will strengthen the proposal;

6.1.2. Policy/Societal Impact: The potential benefits of the research to Singapore, and potential contribution to knowledge and practice. Details on the potential pathways to impact and plans to disseminate results to potential users/industry will greatly strengthen the proposal. Applicants are also encouraged to support their statement of impact with letters of support<sup>5</sup> (using the template provided in Annex C) from potential users such as non-profit organisations, public agencies, and industry partners which are supportive of and interested in the findings of their research. **Provision of letters of support is not mandatory**;

6.1.3. Quality of Research Team: Capabilities and track record of the proposed research team, including inter-institutional and interdisciplinary collaborations. Applicants are encouraged to draw on the best research capabilities across Singapore and collaborate across institutions and discipline areas. Applicants should address how the collaborations will contribute to the wider knowledge base and/or the public/private sector, beyond the interests of the collaborators. For example, research findings that may bring commercial advantages should be published rather than made exclusive to partners;

---

<sup>5</sup> Letters of support are meant to allow the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and the expert panel to make an informed assessment when evaluating the potential impact of the proposed research.

- 6.1.4. **Capability-Building:** Potential to boost and catalyse the development of local social science and humanities research capabilities in Singapore, including the development of human capital and expertise in important fields and sectors. Type B and Type C proposals that support the training of junior investigators and/or research students will be viewed favourably; and
- 6.1.5. **Execution:** Coherence in the proposed execution plans, feasibility of carrying out the research within the given timeframe, and the cost-effectiveness and value for money of the research.
- 6.2. The proposals will undergo a two-stage evaluation process:
- 6.2.1. **Stage One** involves an evaluation by a social science and humanities research expert panel comprising prominent academics in relevant areas. The evaluation is informed and supplemented by peer reviews done by experts in specific fields, to ensure the quality and robustness of the evaluation, as well as by input from potential users and/or beneficiaries of the research, such as public sector agencies.
- 6.2.2. **Stage Two** of the evaluation will be conducted by the SSRC, focusing on the overall merits of each proposal, as well as its strategic relevance and impact to policymakers, Singapore, and the region.

## 7. TIMELINE

---

### 7.1. **Timeline for the 2026 SSHR-TG Call (subject to change at MOE's discretion):**

<i>Open call for proposals</i>	<i>– 2 June 2026</i>
<i>Closing date for proposals</i>	<i>– 25 August 2026</i>
<i>Announcement of grant call results</i>	<i>– March/April 2027</i>

## 8. SUBMISSION PROTOCOL

---

- 8.1. Refer to the application form for the Social Science and Humanities Research Thematic Grant and [Annex B](#) of this document for detailed requirements and guidelines for proposal preparation and submission.
- 8.2. Submitted proposals have to be verified by the Host Institution's Office of Research (ORE) and endorsed by the Director, ORE (DOR) before it can be considered for evaluation. Host Institutions should send all endorsed proposals to [MOE SSRC secretariat@moe.gov.sg](mailto:MOE_SSRC_secretariat@moe.gov.sg) and [grace\\_kwan@moe.gov.sg](mailto:grace_kwan@moe.gov.sg) by 5 p.m. on 25 August 2026.

- 8.3. The Host Institution and Director of Research should work closely with the applicants in the preparation and submission of the documents. MOE will only liaise with the Host Institution for queries from applicants on the SSHR-TG proposals.
- 8.4. Instructions for the submission of proposals by the Host Institution to MOE are as follows:
- 8.4.1. Each proposal should be submitted as an individual document (only in machine-readable pdf format), and the Host Institution will need to consolidate all the proposals in one submission at the email address provided above; and
- 8.4.2. Unless stated otherwise, identities of the Principal Investigator (PI) and co-PIs of each proposal will be subject to review by MOE and the SSRC members.
- 8.5. Researchers are not allowed to submit the same proposal to different grants concurrently, i.e. parallel submissions are not allowed. Applicants should decide which grant to apply for based on the nature of their proposal and the objectives of the grant. Researchers are encouraged to apply for the SSHR-TG if their proposal has strong relevance to the themes supported by the SSHR-TG. If a similar proposal was rejected under another grant (e.g. Academic Research Fund), it should be substantively refined or re-scoped before being submitted to the SSHR-TG.
- 8.6. **Please ensure that the documents are not password- or security-restricted.**

## 9. DATA SHARING POLICY

---

- 9.1. Subject to restrictions related to research ethics, confidentiality and intellectual property, all data generated from research funded by the SSHR-TG should be made available to user communities at the earliest feasible opportunity. This would generally be no later than the release through publication of the study's main findings, or in line with established best practices in the respective fields.
- 9.2. All peer-reviewed publications arising from research funded by the SSHR-TG must be made publicly available no later than 12 months after the official date of publication. A copy of the publication may be deposited in the Host Institution's Open Access repository or any other subject Open Access repository, in accordance with the Host Institution's Open Access policy.

## 10. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

---

- 10.1. Submission of the proposal and information within is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the probability of receiving an award. MOE reserves the right to disclose information submitted to members of the SSRC, staff assistants, expert panellists and external peer reviewers and other government agencies as part of the review process. Requests to exclude

specific reviewers will not be allowed without a clear and valid reason. Information about the researchers may be used to select potential candidates to serve as future peer reviewers or advisory committee members with or without accreditation to the proposal.

- 10.2. The rights and privacy of human subjects who participate in publicly-funded research must be protected at all times.
- 10.3. It is the responsibility of the investigators, their Institutional Review Board, and their Host Institutions to protect the rights of study subjects and the confidentiality of the data, and in compliance with applicable legislation such as the Personal Data Protection Act. Data shared must be anonymised, i.e. free of identifiers that would lead to linkages to or deductive disclosure of individual human subjects.
- 10.4. The informed consent process should include, where appropriate, explicit provisions for sharing of data for wider or future research use to maximise the value of the data, while providing adequate safeguards for human subjects.

#### 11. MISCELLANEOUS

---

- 11.1. The above funding guidelines are for reference and may be changed at MOE's discretion and communicated to the respective Host Institutions.

**ANNEX A****ELIGIBLE HOST INSTITUTIONS FOR  
SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH THEMATIC GRANT**

1. The Host Institutions listed in this Annex are currently eligible to apply for and receive research funding under the Social Science and Humanities Research Thematic Grant (the “SSHR-TG”).
2. Other research organisations that possess an existing in-house capacity to carry out social science and humanities research (SSHR) and have the potential to enhance the research base and the SSHR ecosystem in Singapore may be considered for eligibility to apply for the SSHR-TG. They can be independent research organisations or public agencies with research capabilities.
3. Organisations that wish to apply for the SSHR-TG, but do not belong to or fall within the list of Host Institutions listed in this Annex should contact the SSRC Secretariat (email: [MOE\\_SSRC\\_secretariat@moe.gov.sg](mailto:MOE_SSRC_secretariat@moe.gov.sg)). All Host Institutions with PIs applying for the SSHR-TG must designate a Director of Research (or equivalent) registered with MOE, who will have the responsibilities stated in paragraph 5.2 of the Request for Proposal document.

**ELIGIBLE HOST INSTITUTIONS**

(Including constituent faculties, schools, colleges, research institutes and centres with relevant SSHR capabilities)

1. National University of Singapore
2. Nanyang Technological University
3. Singapore Institute of Technology
4. Singapore Management University
5. Singapore University of Social Sciences
6. Singapore University of Technology and Design
7. University of the Arts Singapore
8. ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute
9. Singapore-ETH Centre (SEC)
10. Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR)



**ANNEX B****ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

1. This annex contains additional guidelines to aid applicants in preparing their proposals. Applicants should refer to this annex when filling up sections 8, 10, and 11 of the application form.

**Details of Research Proposal (Section 11a)**

2. The detailed proposal should be appended to the application form. The following sections are recommended to be included in the detailed proposal, and should be prepared with reference to the information, evaluation criteria and guidelines provided in this document.

- a. **Vision and Rationale**

1. State the vision of the project and explain the key research problem(s) and hypotheses.
2. Summarise how the project would add value to the local research landscape and be of relevance to Singapore and/or the region.
3. Summarise how the project will add to existing research/literature and make a contribution to knowledge in the area. This includes how Singapore-focused research can contribute to the global body of knowledge, evidence and theory.

- b. **Research Plan**

1. Provide details on the objectives of the project and the scientific challenges to be addressed. Highlight how new knowledge would be created or frontiers of science would be pushed.
2. Account for the current state of the art in the subject, including existing comparable work conducted in other research institutions, and explain in detail how the proposed project contributes to knowledge in the area.
3. Provide a full and detailed description of the research design and proposed research methods. Highlight, in particular, the novelty of the approach, and the potential to create breakthroughs.
4. For projects comprising multiple project clusters or sub-projects, explain how the individual project clusters or sub-projects will be integrated. Highlight cross-dependencies and inter-disciplinary synergies wherever appropriate. This is required in particular for Type B and Type C projects.

- c. **Data Collection Plan**

1. Elaborate on the data required for the research, the sources of such data, and strategies for data collection. Where relevant, provide supporting evidence to demonstrate the feasibility of the data collection plan. This could include samples of preliminary data sets that have been collected by the research team, or written

confirmation from data sources that the relevant data will be made available for the research.

2. Elaborate on other sources of data that would be useful for the research or that would help to improve the quality of analysis, but which are currently unavailable or difficult to collect. Please be as specific as possible in the description of such data sets. Elaborate on the reasons and challenges faced in obtaining such data. Explain how such limitations could be overcome, and state if there are any budget implications in doing so.
3. Elaborate on the mechanisms that will be used to share and preserve the data after the completion of project; and expected timeline for which the data will be made available to user communities.

d. Potential Impact

1. Outline the pathway to impact, and identify potential users of the research outside of the academic community, such as non-profit organisations, public agencies, and industry partners which are supportive of and interested in the findings of their research.
2. Provide a clear dissemination strategy for the research to show how the research outcomes will be communicated to interested parties, including potential users.

e. Research Team and Organisational Structure

1. Describe the proposed organisational structure and include an organisational chart.
2. Explain how the core team would be embedded within the local research scene.
3. Explain how the research team possesses the skills and competencies required to execute the research work successfully.
4. Highlight the relevant track record and capabilities of individual PIs, their international standing and any unique competitive advantages that they bring to the team.
5. Account for existing collaborations (local/international) with other research entities, or any plans to leverage on such collaborations.

f. Equipment and Infrastructure

1. Discuss the laboratories, shared facilities and equipment currently available for the project.
2. Discuss those that will be offered by the Host Institution and other institutions for use (if applicable).
3. Explain if existing infrastructure would be sufficient to conduct the proposed research project.

g. Financial Plan and Support

1. Discuss the Host Institution's in-kind contributions, including its plan to share space and facilities.

2. Wherever applicable, discuss the strategy for gaining other forms of financial support (for example, from industry or public agencies).
- h. Ethics and Risks
  1. Discuss any ethical issues that might be raised by the research and how you will address these.
  2. List any risks that you anticipate in bringing the project to completion, and state the actions to be taken to mitigate these risks.

### **Project Deliverables and Desired Outcomes (Section 8)**

3. PIs should describe in detail the deliverables and desired outcomes from their project. This could include the following:
  - a. Manpower training. PIs should describe how the research project contributes to the development of research talent and human capital in the social sciences and humanities in Singapore.

Possible deliverables include research manpower development such as the number of PhD, Masters, and undergraduate students to be trained. As appropriate, the team could also specify specialised research skills which these personnel will be trained in with as part of the grant.

- b. Research Quality and Impact. PIs should describe, in quantitative and qualitative terms, the demonstrable contribution that the research project will make to knowledge and practice in the field, and how the research findings may be used for policy and societal impact in Singapore (and beyond, if appropriate).

Possible academic deliverables include the number of publications (including a target for the number in top 10% journals), books, book chapters and reports published; number and type of conferences and workshops attended/held to disseminate findings; and the number of data sets to be shared.

Possible non-academic deliverables include op-eds, policy papers/ consultations/ briefs, presentations at policy forums and conferences, and the development and dissemination of interventions.

- c. Collaboration with industry/user communities. PIs should describe any collaboration with industry or user communities that the project will undertake (e.g. research collaboration agreements), and the desired outcomes of such collaborations.

**Proposed Budget and Justification (Section 10)**

4. Budgets<sup>6</sup> should realistically reflect what is required to execute the scope of work that is proposed. Where possible, existing equipment and facilities should be used. Cost estimates should be credible, i.e. there should be no budget inflation.
5. Indirect research cost (IRC). PIs should note that IRC is provided at a flat rate of 30% of the total qualifying direct costs (less research scholarships) of each newly approved project, and **must be budgeted within the overall cap of Type A grant (\$1.5M), Type B grant (\$5M) and Type C grant (\$10M)**.

---

<sup>6</sup>Upon in-principle approval for the research programme, MOE will embark on a budget assessment exercise before finalising the budget to be supported.

**ANNEX C****LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

**The provision of letters of support is not mandatory.** Letters of support are meant to allow the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and the expert panel to make an informed assessment when evaluating the potential impact of the proposed research.

In cases where agencies have agreed to provide letters of support, the letters should present the following information:

**Identification:** The opening paragraph of the letter should identify the name of the representative and the name of the non-profit organisation/public agency/industry partner that he/she represents.

The letter should clearly state the following details:

- a) **Relevance and Potential Impact:** How the proposed research has relevance and potential impact on the organisation's work, e.g. how it can contribute to and/or influence the development of policy and/or service delivery. Additional comments on how the proposed research can strengthen its relevance to and/or impact on the organisation's work.
- b) **Collaborations:** The possibility of collaborations between the organisation and the applicant on the proposed research, if it is recommended for funding. Such collaborations can be in the form of supporting the research team with inputs and/or resources, e.g. professional expertise, relevant data.

**Authorisation:** Letters should be properly authorised by the aforementioned person with his/her signature. For letters of support from public agencies, the letters will have to be endorsed by the Deputy Secretary (or equivalent).