

The University of Hong Kong
Arts Technology Lab
Seed Funding Scheme for Students (2026-27)
Guidelines

1) Overview

Funding scheme	Seed Funding Scheme for Students of Arts Technology Lab, Faculty of Arts
Funding body	Arts Technology Lab (ATL), Faculty of Arts
Objective	The scheme sets up for students for innovative research projects in arts and technology, empowers full-time students to explore interdisciplinary projects, enhances their creative and technological skills, and contributes to the evolving Arts-Tech landscape.
Call for application	All year round
Deadline of receipt of application	July 24, 2026
Status	Open for application all year round
Project Period covered	From September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2027 (1 year)
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All full-time HKU Students, subject to the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Principal Investigator (PI) must be a student from the Faculty of Arts. ○ Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) or team members may be from other faculties. • Each student may serve as the PI for a successful application ONCE during their period of candidature. If an application is unsuccessful, the PI is allowed to apply again.
Funding amount	Stage 1: HK\$10,000 (maximum) Stage 2: HK\$20,000 (maximum) Stage 3: HK\$20,000 (maximum) Total: HK\$50,000 (maximum)
Application procedure	Please complete the application form and financial budget for Stage 1 and submit them with research proposal/ powerpoints/ apps/ demo videos to atlab@hku.hk
Reimbursement procedure for Stage 1, 2 & 3	Successful applicants will submit the following documents to Ms. Anny Hui (see her contact below) of the ATL Office based on the following schedule:

	<p>Stage 1 & Stage 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit the project reports and deliverables in early December and early May respectively. 2. Submit receipts, and supporting documents for reimbursement within 30 days of the completion of the respective stage (no later than August 31, 2027). <p>Stage 3 (End of Project):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit the project report and deliverables within 30 days after the end of the project. 2. Submit receipts and supporting documents for reimbursement not more than 30 days after the end of the project.
Submission and enquiry	<p>Ms. Anny Hui of Arts Technology Lab Email: atlab@hku.hk Phone: 3917 0659 Office: Room 4.40, 4/F, Run Run Shaw Tower, HKU</p>

2) PROJECT STRUCTURE & TIMELINE

The Seed Funding Scheme is a one-year commitment divided into **three** stages to align with the funding structure.

IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR APPLICANTS:

Although the initial application and Stage 1 administrative requirements only mandate the submission of a **Stage 1 budget proposal**, successful projects require a long-term vision. Applicants are strongly reminded to prepare a **complete one-year research project plan, comprehensive budget plan, and research presentation** at the pre-stage/application phase. Having a holistic plan for the entire 12-month duration is essential for demonstrating project feasibility and ensuring a smooth transition across all three stages.

- **Stage 1: Foundation (Months 1–3)**
 - **Focus:** Literature review, conceptual design, and feasibility testing.
 - **Requirement:** Submission of a written **Stage 1 Research Report**, demo and video, preliminary deliverables and a **Stage 2 Research Proposal with research budget proposal**.

- **Stage 2: Development & Implementation (Months 4–8)**
 - **Focus:** Prototype development, user testing, and refinement.

- **Requirement:** Submission of a written **Stage 2 Progress Report**, a working prototype / demo / video submission and a **Stage 3 Research Proposal with research budget proposal**.
- **Stage 3: Finalization & Output (Months 9–12)**
 - **Focus:** Final output delivery, launch, or exhibition.
 - **Requirement:** Submission of a **comprehensive written Final Project & Financial Report**, a summary video of the project, and a face-to-face presentation to the review panel (Month 12).
 - **Extensions:** Requests for extensions beyond 12 months are generally not allowed.

3) FINANCIAL REGULATIONS & EXPENDITURE

IMPORTANT: Grants must ONLY be spent on items approved by the Committee, and spending on each item MUST NOT exceed the approved amount. Unapproved expenses cannot be reimbursed.

3.1 Approved Usage of Funding

- **Research Equipment:** Supports essential research equipment. **Excludes** personal electronic devices (e.g. cell phones, tablets, iPod, MP3 players, digital cameras/ video recorders) and standard office equipment (e.g. computers, servers, laptop computers, printers, scanners and standard/software license/dataset) known to be available. PIs with genuine needs to purchase special items will have to provide strong and sound justifications (e.g. study on mobile apps);
- **General Expenses:** Covers consumables directly related to the research. **Excludes** stationery, journal subscriptions, and professional membership fees.
- **Research Materials:** Includes digital assets and software licenses. For AI/software subscriptions, funding is strictly limited to the subscription period falling within the active project period.
- **Travel Support:** Supports local/ international academic field trips or data collection (e.g., archival study, fieldwork) essential to the research. **Note: Conference attendance is NOT supported.**
- **Funding Conjunction & Double Benefits:** The award may be used in conjunction with funding from any other internal or external sources for the same project. However, Specifically, **double-claiming is strictly prohibited.** You cannot claim reimbursement for the same individual expense item (e.g., the same airfare ticket or piece of equipment) if they are already covered by another award or grant.

3.2 Ownership & Asset Management

- **University Property:** Equipment and other items purchased with University funds remain the property of The University of Hong Kong.
- **Re-deployment:** The University reserves the right to re-deploy the equipment on completion or termination of the project.
- **Inventory:** All purchased items from ATL Seed Fund Scheme for Students will be entered into the equipment inventory of the Arts Technology Lab.
- **Inventory Requirement:**
 - **For equipment costing over HK\$5,000:** The applicant must bring the physical equipment to the ATL office **within one week of purchase** for inventory recording, complete the Equipment Loan & University Inventory Record Form, and submit the reimbursement documents to the ATL admin staff.
 - **For equipment costing HK\$5,000 or lower:** The applicant **does not need to bring the equipment to the ATL office within one week**. However, when submitting reimbursement documents after the respective project stages, the applicant must present the physical equipment to the ATL admin staff and complete the Equipment Loan & University Inventory Record Form.
- **Equipment Return:** At the end of the project, all research equipments must be returned to the ATL in good working condition.
- **Inventory Liability (Loss, Damage, or Theft):** PIs are responsible for the safe keeping of all purchased equipment. If any item is lost, damaged, or stolen, the PI must immediately notify the ATL office. In the event of theft, a formal police report must be filed, and a copy of the report must be submitted to the ATL office to facilitate necessary insurance reporting to the University's Finance and Enterprises Office (FEO).
- **Library Accessions:** Books, journals, documents, and photocopies of publications acquired from Arts Tech Seed Funding will be accessions to the University Libraries.

3.3 Compliance & Reimbursement Procedures

- **General Regulations:** This award is subject to the University's financial regulations, including the Regulations Governing University Research Grants and the Departmental Financial Administration (DFA) guidelines available on the Finance and Enterprises Office (FEO) homepage. Please submit your expense claims via ATL admin staff to FEO and ensure compliance with the prescribed ordering and reimbursement procedures.
- **Funding Disclosure:** If you have other funding sources for the same project, you must submit all relevant supporting documents to the ATL for review. This ensures compliance with regulations regarding funding conjunction and top-up coverage.

- **Budget Adjustments & Unspent Balances:** You must obtain written approval before changing any items or moving funds between budget categories. Any money left over at the end of the project must be returned to the Faculty.
- **Reimbursement Requirements & Policy:** All reimbursements can only be processed **after the completion** of the trip, purchase, item, or task. Pre-payment claims or advances are generally not supported. All claims must be accompanied by **original itemized receipts and the approved application**. Please refer to the separate "Reimbursement Document Checklist" for detailed requirements on supporting evidence.
- **Deadlines:**
 1. **Interim Claims (Stage 1 & Stage 2):** The project report, deliverables should be submitted in **early December** and **early May** respectively. The receipts, and supporting documents for reimbursement must be submitted within 30 days of the completion of each stage's expenditures (no later than **August 31, 2027**).
 2. **Final Settlement (Stage 3):** Final project reports and deliverables must be submitted **within 30 days** after the end of the project. Receipts and supporting documents for reimbursement must be submitted **not more than 30 days** after the end of the project.
- **Late Claims:** Expenses submitted after these deadlines will generally not be processed.

3.4 Budget Virement & Project Administration

- **Budget Variations:** Any new budget items not covered in the original proposal must seek prior approval from the Administering Authority.
- **Project Extensions:** Requests for extensions must be made **before** the project completion date. Applicants must provide a strong justification and a revised budget for the remaining funds. All extensions are subject to review and approval; expenses incurred beyond the final (or extended) completion date will not be allowed.
- **Transfer of Project Leadership:** If the Principal Investigator (PI) is unable to continue or leaves the project, the PI role may be officially transferred to a Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) to ensure project continuity. This transfer requires prior written approval from the Administering Authority. To align with the scheme's eligibility requirements, the Co-PI assuming the leadership role must also be a student from the Faculty of Arts.
- **Termination of Candidature:** If the PI leaves the University before the completion of the project and a leadership transfer is not requested, not approved, or no eligible Co-PI is available, the project account will be terminated immediately. All unspent funds will revert to the Arts Tech Lab Seed Fund.

4. TRAVEL SUPPORT REGULATIONS

Specific regulations for international academic field trips or research-related data collection:

- **Study Leave:** Applicants must apply for study leave prior to the trip as necessary, and all travel reimbursements must fall strictly within this approved study leave period.
- **Airfare:** Reimbursement is confined to the **cheapest return economy class airfare** by the most direct route or by another route if this is less than the cost of the cheapest direct flight.

The funding recipient wishing to stop over en route to the destination, or wishing to use an indirect route, must provide to the University's Finance and Enterprises Office **two additional quotations from two different travel agencies** for the cheapest direct airfare to destination **when submitting their application**. This will be used for the purpose of assessing the travel costs which may be set against the funding support.

- **Accommodation:** Claims are limited to room costs only for a period starting one day before and ending one day after the approved research activity. Applicants must provide **two accommodation quotations when submitting their application**.
- **Non-reimbursable expenses:** Expenses associated with the following activities / items are strictly non-reimbursable:
 - quarantine expenses;
 - fax, international phone calls, laundry and room service,
 - meals (including breakfast),
 - side-trips and post-activity site visits;
 - receptions, local tours, and associated proceedings.
- **Insurance:** Recipients qualify for travel insurance under the University's Corporate Business Travel programme. For details, please refer to HKU Portal > SIS Menu > Financial Services > FEO Info and Hotlines > Finance and Enterprises Office > [Insurance Information for Students](#) .Please note that expenses for any additional or top-up travel insurance **cannot** be covered or reimbursed.
- **Eligibility upon Departure:** Applicants who are leaving the University shall not be eligible for the award of travel support if the travel takes place after their last day of study or registration/candidature with the University.
- **Non-reimbursable Travel Cancellations:** Funding recipients who are subsequently unable to make the trip due to change of personal circumstances (except for medical reasons) or visa delay/denial will not be reimbursed for any pre-paid registration/enrolment fees or other associated cancellation charges.

5. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

To ensure project milestones are met and funds are utilized appropriately, successful applicants are required to submit the following reports:

- **Progress Reports (Stage 1 & Stage 2):** At the end of Stage 1 (Month 3) and Stage 2 (Month 8), the Principal Investigator must submit a Progress Report detailing the research progress, prototype development, user testing, and conceptual findings. This must be accompanied by the Research Proposal and Budget for the subsequent stage.
- **Final Project & Financial Report (Stage 3):** Upon completion of the project (Month 12), a comprehensive Final Project & Financial Report must be submitted. This report should summarize the overall achievements, final output delivery (e.g., launch or exhibition), deliverables, and include a complete financial breakdown of all expenditures incurred throughout the project.
- **Delayed Reimbursements:** Failure to submit the required progress or final reports on time will result in delays to your reimbursement. The ATL office must collect all required reports and deliverables before any reimbursement claims can be processed.

6. COMPLIANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

- **Formal Acknowledgement:** The “Arts-Tech Seed Funding Scheme, Faculty of Arts” must be formally acknowledged in all publicity materials, publications, and outputs of the project.
- **Ethics & Safety:** Necessary ethics (HREC) and safety approvals must be obtained **before** project commencement.
- **Future Presentations & Promotional Use:** The Arts Technology Lab may invite successful applicants to showcase their projects at future live presentations and events, including after the official completion of their funded project. By accepting the seed funding, applicants consent to ATL and the Faculty of Arts using, exhibiting, or demonstrating their project deliverables, abstracts, and associated materials for these showcases and promotional purposes.

7. CONTACT INFORMATION

Ms. Anny Hui Arts Technology Lab, Faculty of Arts

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Office: Room 4.40, 4/F, Run Run Shaw Tower, Centennial Campus, HKU