

TCM Development Grant Frequently Asked Questions

I. General Questions

1. How will TCMDG support TCM sector development?

The TCMDG aims to support both capability and capacity building of the TCM industry. The grant will support sector development on three fronts – individuals, TCM course providers and TCM clinics.

2. What is the period or deadline for applications?

For grant support for individuals, application is open from 1 Jan to 31 Dec each year, for courses attended in that same calendar year, i.e. courses attended in 2020 must be submitted by 31 Dec 2020.

3. Will I be able to claim for events attended/held or facilities/IT enhancements purchased before 2018?

As the TCMDG was launched only in January 2018, events or facilities/IT enhancements that commenced before January 2018 will not be eligible for the grant.

4. How will the funding support be given to me?

As a general rule, support will be on reimbursement basis. However, in view that the full costs of organizing a training event or facilities/IT enhancements could be high, organisations that hope to receive part of the funding support before the event or renovation/purchase commencement are required to submit their application 3 months in advance, which upon approval, get will 70% of the approved amount disbursed to them. The balance 30% will be reimbursed upon completion and submission of invoices and evidence of payment to the vendor.

5. Can I seek concurrent funding from different government agencies?

To avoid duplicate funding, cost components of events/programmes/purchase that are already subsidised by other government agencies (e.g. SkillsFuture, e2i, IMDA, WDA) will not be funded.

6. Can I make claims on behalf of other people or organisations?

No, individuals or organisations must submit their own claims.

7. Does MOH have any guidelines or recommendation of common items that clinics might purchase e.g. software, computers, taps and sinks etc.?

No, clinics or organisations may source for their preferred products, putting in relevant reasons to support the purchase of the item in the application form. MOH will assess the applications on the justifications and reasonableness of the item and budget requested.

8. Can I submit my applications in Chinese?

To expedite processing, all applications must be completed in English.

II. Grant Support for Individuals

9. What are the current programmes/schemes available to support the professional development and training of TCM practitioners?

There are currently some pockets of government programmes/schemes available to support the professional development and training of TCM practitioners. E.g. through e2i and SkillsFuture.

10. What are the measures in place to ensure that the programmes are effective and relevant to the professional development of TCM practitioners?

Courses for TCMPs and eligible for CPE points must be accredited by the TCMP Board. Courses not awarding CPE points must be provided by accredited organisations under TCMP Board.

11. Are herbal dispensers not listed with TCMP Board eligible for the grant?

Yes, herbal dispensers are eligible as long as they are working in a TCM clinic or Chinese medical hall setting.

12. Do I need to show proof that I am working in a TCM clinic or Chinese medical hall? (For herbal dispensers and clinic assistants)

Yes, you will have to fill up the relevant section in the application form.

13. What courses are applicable for me and where can I find them? (For herbal dispensers and clinic assistants)

You may look up the websites or call the TCMP Board accredited organisations to enquire about the range of courses that they offer.

14. If I am concurrently a herbal dispenser and clinic assistant, can I make claims under both category i.e. \$100 for herbalist courses and \$100 for clinic assistant courses? (For herbal dispensers and clinic assistants)

No, persons who are concurrent herbal dispenser and clinic assistant may attend courses meant for both herbalists and clinic assistants, but will only be entitled to funding support under one category i.e. \$100/year.

15. When and how will I be reimbursed?

Claimants can expect to receive their reimbursements in the first quarter of the next calendar year via GIRO transfer. i.e. for claims submitted by 31 Dec 2020, you can expect to receive your reimbursements by the first quarter of 2021. Please ensure that the bank account number that you provided in the online application is accurate.

III. Grant Support for Training Providers

16. What are some common items that are eligible for grant support?

You may refer to the Budget Form for examples of items eligible for grant support.

17. Can I make claims for manpower required to organize training events?

No, manpower expenses are not eligible for claims.

18. Can I claim for services of an events company to help organize a very large scale international conference?

Yes, but the amount supported is subject to reasonableness of budget.

19. If a training provider submits an application at the end of 2020 for an event in the first quarter of the next year in 2021, is this considered as an application in 2020 or 2021 since training providers are only eligible for the TCMDG support for one event per calendar year.

The date of the actual event will determine which year the TCMDG support is for. In the above example, the event will count as a 2021 TCMDG support for that training provider.

IV. Grant Support for TCM Clinics

20. Does my clinic have to be listed with TCMP Board to qualify for the funding support?

Currently, TCM clinics are not licensed and therefore not required to be listed with TCMP Board. However, under the Ethical Guidelines for TCM Practitioners, the name of the clinic should be submitted to the Board for approval.

21. What are some common items that are eligible for grant support?

You may refer to the Budget Form for examples of items eligible for grant support.

22. If I am setting up my clinic from scratch, can I claim for part of the renovation cost associated with the installation of sinks or elderly friendly facilities and for purchase of clinic management software and IT hardware?

Yes, claims for facilities and IT enhancement are capped at 50% of cost incurred or \$10,000 and \$25,000 respectively, whichever is lower.

23. Can I apply for facilities support now, and make another application for IT support (software and/or hardware) another time?

No, the TCMDG offers a one-time support per company for their TCM clinics. Each company (regardless of how many clinic branches) is eligible to apply only once.

Facilities Enhancement

24. Which areas of facilities enhancements are supported by TCMDG?

To create greater awareness and highlight the importance of infection control practices and to mitigate any potential risk to public safety, MOH, in consultation with the TCM

Practitioners Board and major TCM associations, had issued a “General Advisory on Good Clinical Practice and Infection Control for TCM Practice (2020)” in March 2020.

To encourage TCMPs to adopt the practices outlined in the advisory, funding support would be provided to help defray installation cost of hand sinks and elbow operated taps. With a large proportion of elderly patients seeking TCM treatment, funding support could be extended to include the installation of grab bars and ramps in washrooms.

25. Can I claim for renovation and demolition cost associated with the installation of sinks?

Yes, renovation and demolition cost are covered under facilities enhancement up to 50% of cost incurred or \$10,000 whichever is lower.

26. What are the current infection control measures at TCM clinics?

TCMPs are bound by the code of conduct and practice outlined in the Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines (ECEG) published by the TCMP Board. TCMPs are also strongly encouraged to adopt the practices outlined in the “General Advisory on Good Clinical Practice and Infection Control for TCM Practice (2020)”.

27. Can the TCMDG be used to cover cost of machinery e.g. herb packing machine, to improve productivity of the TCM clinic?

One of the objective of the TCMDG is to help improve TCM service delivery in the areas of infection control and patient safety, especially among elderly patients. TCM clinics/operators/manufacturers can approach other government funding agencies e.g. Enterprise Singapore that provides funding for SMEs to improve productivity and business processes.

28. Can I make claims after renovation works are completed?

Assessment of applications and claims are based on criteria e.g. whether the claim items and amounts are reasonable and in line with the TCMDG objectives, and applicants may not be awarded the full sum applied for. To avoid any possible misunderstanding due to misaligned expectations, applicants are strongly encouraged to apply and seek approval at least 3 months before the start their planned enhancement works.

IT Enhancement

29. Since IMDA is already providing support for the purchase of clinic management system under the “SME GO digital” programme, what other items can I claim under this category?

TCMDG could provide support for TCM providers who wish to pursue projects or items that are not supported by the “SMEs Go Digital” programme. Other than clinic management software, TCMDG can also support

- Software to support data collection and statistical analysis
- Establishment of online portals to publish information and provide online platform for patients’ feedback

30. Where can I look to for such clinic management software?

Examples of clinic management software providers that are already in the market include MyHealth Technology Solutions Pte Ltd and Bevootech Pte Ltd.

31. Are clinics allowed to make claims for the rental or subscription to a clinic management system?

The TCMDG IT enhancement is to support TCM clinics to embrace IT adoption in its operation and is a one-off grant. Hence, the rental/subscription of software will not be supported because the clinic is not deemed to own the software and the permission to use the software will cease when the rental stops. Besides, rental/subscription fees are deemed to be part of the clinic's operating costs, which the TCMDG does not support.

32. Can I claim for IT enhancement to upgrade my current clinic management software?

No, funding support for IT enhancement will be provided only to clinics without any IT system in place.

33. Can I procure IT/clinic management systems from overseas vendors?

Priority will be given for procurement through local vendors. For overseas vendors, these will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

34. Can I procure software development services from freelancers?

Procurement of services from freelancers will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Past works, track record and reliability of the freelancer providers are some factors that would be taken into consideration.

35. Can I make claims for hardware only?

No, support for IT hardware will only be applicable for TCM clinics that are concurrently seeking support for procurement of clinic management software.

36. Can I make claims after purchase of software and hardware?

Assessment of applications and claims are based on criteria e.g. whether the claim items and amounts are reasonable and in line with the TCMDG objectives, and applicants may not be awarded the full sum applied for. To avoid any possible misunderstanding due to misaligned expectations, applicants are strongly encouraged to apply and seek approval at least 3 months before the start their planned enhancement works.