STDR FAQ

S/N	Question	Answer
General questions on grant call		
1.	What is the success rate of applications? Approximately how many projects will be awarded in each round?	STDR applications are evaluated based on the merit of each individual proposal, and we aim to fund all worthy proposals.
2.	Does the geographical location of the team matters?	The research should be based in a Singapore publicly funded institution, as grant funding cannot be used to fund research and development activities overseas. The lead PI should hold at least a 0.7 FTE primary appointment in a Singapore publicly funded research or tertiary institution. The Co-I should also be employed by a Singapore institution. There is no restriction on geographical location of the collaborator. Please write to us with a waiver request and justification if you would like to appeal against this eligibility criteria.
3.	Does having a clinical collaborator boost the chances of getting a successful proposal?	The success of the proposal depends on the strengths of the application. Working with a clinical collaborator may help strengthen the proposal by allowing access to patient samples. Clinical collaborators may also offer a clinical perspective on the feasibility of the project. Applicants are therefore strongly encouraged to get a clinical collaborator.
4.	How do I find people to collaborate with?	Taking part in seminars and networking events would be a good way to meet people and learn more about their research. This would help identify those whom you are interested in working with.
5.	I am a research scientist, is a letter of support from my supervisor required?	If your job grade is equivalent to that of a PI's, you do not need to submit a letter from your supervisor. If your job grade is lower than that of a PI, please submit a letter of support from your supervisor. The requirements for the letter can be found in the info sheet.
6.	I can't seem to find my Co-investigator/ collaborator on iGrants	This is likely because they do not have active accounts. If they have never registered for iGrants accounts, please ask them to create a user account at https://igrants-app.a-star.edu.sg. If they already have an iGrants account, it may have been locked due to inactivity. Please ask them to contact their institution's iGrants Admin to unlock the account.

7.	How do I know whether I am working in a space with no FTO (Freedom to Operate)? Can I still apply for STDR if I already have a startup company or licensed my tech to a company?	STDR only funds researchers from public research institutions. STDR can only support the proposed research work if it is done clearly in the public research institution and the foreground IP generated clearly belongs to the public institutions without any encumbrance; i.e. the institution is free to negotiate any commercialisation deals with any potential partners. Proposals where background IP is tied to the startup (e.g. exclusively licensed to the startup), or if foreground IP has some exclusive arrangement with the company, are considered encumbered. We encourage researchers to engage your IEOs for early discussions and assistance on IP matters.
8.	What if we are not sure whether our project falls in the Pre-Pilot or Pilot category?	You may contact our strategic partners EDDC and SMART, who help to administer the Pre-Pilot streams, for consultations. 1. For enquiries about Pre-Pilot Stream 1 and consultation on single asset applications, please reach out to: Dr Christophe Bodenreider (EDDC) christophe_bodenreider@eddc.sg Ms Chia Hsin-Ee (EDDC) chia_hsin_ee@eddc.sg 2. For enquiries about Pre-Pilot Stream 2 and consultation on platform applications, please reach out to: Dr Howard Califano (SMART) howard.califano@smart.mit.edu Mr Brian Yen (SMART) brian.yen@smart.mit.edu
9.	Have the reviewers signed confidentiality agreements?	All STDR reviewers have signed a Confidential Undertaking ensuring the secure handling of all submitted materials. Applicants are encouraged to provide comprehensive data to strengthen their proposals, and disclose confidential information where necessary to convey a better understanding of the project.
Questions on scope		
10.	Is there any particular focus on any disease indication or therapeutic modality?	We accept therapeutic projects in any disease indication and therapeutic modality. However, since medical need and/or market size are part of the STDR evaluation criteria, applicants should choose an appropriate disease indication or modality that demonstrate potential for commercial outcomes.
11.	Does STDR support veterinary drug innovations?	No, STDR doesn't support veterinary drug innovations as we fund projects in human therapeutic applications.
12.	Does STDR support medical devices?	No, STDR only support projects related to drug discovery and development.

13.	Does STDR support formulation and in-vivo testing of a therapeutic drug?	Yes, STDR supports formulation and in-vivo testing.
14.	Does STDR support projects investigating drug combinations?	Yes, STDR supports drug combination projects. Applicants working on this are encouraged to address regulatory pathways for drug combinations.
15.	Is a new technology for scaled production of therapeutic products accepted as a platform technology?	Yes, platforms for scaled production of therapeutic products are considered. Applicants with such a technology are encouraged to apply with an appropriate lead asset with strong medical need and pharma interest, to demonstrate commercial viability of the platform.
16.	I applied to STDR last year with a project on antibiotics. One of the comments is that antibiotic development has low market value. Since we cannot change the antibiotic market, does STDR still supports antibiotic proposals?	STDR accepts proposals in the antibiotics space, as there is still value in developing new antibiotics due to rising antimicrobial resistance. However, as with other proposals, we ask that applicants think about the potential commercialisation pathway and strategic partnerships, especially considering the challenging market outlook. Applicants should articulate the steps taken to manage the challenges.
17.	Does STDR support drug development for rare cancers, which have limited markets?	STDR supports drug development for rare cancers. However, as with other proposals, we ask that applicants think about the potential commercialisation pathway and strategic partnerships, especially considering the challenging market outlook. Applicants should articulate the steps taken to manage the challenges.
Questions on resubmission and possible overlaps		
18.	We applied previously, and plan to submit the same application with new data and a comprehensive revision. Would it be regarded as a resubmission or new submission?	This would be regarded as a resubmission. Please provide your previous submission and reviewer comments as annexes, and describe how you have addressed the reviewers' comments in the current application.
19.	If last year's proposal is on a single asset, and this year we plan to submit a platform application, is it still treated as a resubmission?	If the technology is related to a previously rejected submission (e.g. the platform is an expansion of the previous single asset application), it will be treated as a resubmission. Please submit the documents stated in Qn 18.
20.	Is it possible to apply for STDR if similar proposals have been submitted to other grants?	As double-dipping is not allowed under the grants T&Cs, please indicate if there is any potential overlap of the other grants with STDR. Applicants should state how overlaps would be managed.
21.	Can we apply for the Pilot grant call while our Pre-Pilot project is still on-going?	Yes, you may apply to the Pilot grant call. However, if the Pilot application is related to the ongoing Pre-Pilot project, please note our answer to Qn 20 – any potential overlaps will need to be clearly stated with their management measures. Applicants should also elaborate how/why the new Pilot scope could progress independently of the findings/completion of the Pre-Pilot project.

Questions on commercialisation strategy		
22.	Can you elaborate on what applicants with single asset projects would need to provide to demonstrate that they have considered the commercialisation strategy?	It would be important to first identify the commercialisation strategy (e.g. out-licensing, co-development, spinning off), and develop a roadmap towards that end-goal, in the form of a timeline and specific potential partners (e.g. pharma companies already in the space). You should also indicate if you have already approached them to initiate discussions, and if so, elaborate on the discussions. It would also be important to look at the freedom-to-operate for your single asset, and either take steps towards protecting your IP or have a plan to protecting it. Finally, we also encourage applicants to consider the regulatory pathway and clinical feasibility of their target indication and/or therapeutic modality, and delineate mitigation strategies for any potential obstacles or barriers. Please refer to guiding questions in the proposal template for more details.
23.	What should be emphasised in the commercialisation strategy for platform technologies?	As with Qn 22, it would be important to identify the commercialisation strategy, and develop a roadmap towards your end-goal. It would also be helpful to emphasise the differentiation of the platform above others currently in the market or in development. For the first indication, it would be important to consider the clinical feasibility of the target indication and/or therapeutic modality, as well as pick a good lead with good market opportunity and differentiation above the current standard of care and/or competitors.
24.	What does it mean to develop a differentiation strategy?	A differentiation strategy is to identify the unique value proposition and competitive advantage of your asset and/or platform above other competitors in the clinic or in development. This can for example be in terms of efficacy, safety, patient profile, or cost. Where possible or relevant, applicants are encouraged to conduct or plan for head-to-head comparisons with their competitors to show their differentiation.