



Pre-Incubation Centre (Pi Centre)

Entrance Application Guidelines

[\(January 2014\)](#)

What is ACE Hub?

It is a university-wide education and support initiative to cultivate creativity and innovation using an entrepreneurial approach. ACE Hub marshals efforts of different units of CUHK, including the Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO), the Center for Entrepreneurship (CfE), and Centre for Innovation and Technology (CINTEC). It serves CUHK faculty members, staff, students and alumni in DIFFERENT disciplines and faculties, advancing them from idea, startup to growth and expansion.

ACE Hub offers tools and techniques for new initiatives and ventures to start, explore new opportunities and grow, organizes workshops and advisory services by experts, facilitates access to mentors and community resources, and matches them to collaborators, donors, impact investors, angel investors, and other exit opportunities. ACE Hub works closely with its community partners aimed to promote innovation and entrepreneurship.

What is Pi Centre?

ACE Hub runs a pre-incubation programme at the Pi Centre, and it is located in the Lady Ho Tung Hall (next to the Pentecostal Mission Hall Complex).

Pre-incubation takes place at the **seed** stage where the ideas of the participants are still conceptual and developing. The Pi Centre aims at providing assistance to incubatees to assess their creative ideas, to develop them into forms of social or business venture, so as to be qualified to join external incubation programme(s). The Centre provides (a) workspace and facilities, (b) monitoring/development & mentorship support for successful applicants **for up to ONE year¹**.

Pi Centre is an open space to cultivate new ideas and initiatives. It is established with a strong conviction that CU members can turn their fun and creative ideas into impactful social or business ventures that are sustainable and, at the same time, socially responsible and impactful to the society.

¹ Student(s) who will complete their academic programme(s) at CUHK during the pre-incubation period may apply for maintaining their status at the Pi Centre until the end of the approved period for the respective admitted team.

A. Eligibility & Application for being a Team at the Pi Centre

1. CUHK students (undergraduate and postgraduate) in ANY disciplines, who have an innovative idea and a passion to create significant human, social, or market value. The applicants must carry a valid student status when they apply.
2. Both individuals and teams can apply.
3. Interested students will be required to fill out an Application Form from the Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO). An initial Execution Plan, together with the Application Form, should also be submitted. This Plan should include concrete milestones expected to be achieved in the pre-incubation at the Pi Centre.
4. An Assessment Panel will assess the application according to the innovation or idea, and the vision to create value. The Panel will also assess the Execution Plan for its carefully thought-out implementation process and details. See more details in Part C.
5. Priority will be given to:
 - 5.1. Applicants whose ideas and plans are backed by research and/or scientific discoveries with endorsement from research faculties and academic supervisors.
 - 5.2. Applicants whose ideas and plans that are recognized in open or university-wide competitions, or have received awards or endorsements from other authorities.
 - 5.3. Teams that involve students from more than one Faculty or Department, and/or with diverse, complementary skillsets.

B. Rules and Conditions for Admitted Teams

6. Successful applications (Pi Teams) will be provided with FREE workspace and facilities at the Pi Centre on campus, together with strategic mentorship and managerial support of the Pi Centre and under the ACE Hub.
 - 6.1. Well-equipped workspace and facilities² on campus, including desks and chairs, Internet services, meeting rooms, shared workshop space etc.
 - 6.2. The Account Manager together with other mentors will help the startup team on milestone planning and execution, and advise the team in various aspects of starting a venture ranging from technical support, business model development, marketing, community liaison, investment, to deal making, etc.
7. Responsibilities
 - 7.1. All team members are required to sign an Admission Agreement.

² The usage of the workspace and facilities should observe the regulations as required by the premise and the Pi Centre.

- 7.2. Attend training sessions and other activities organized by the Pi Centre and ACE Hub as appropriate. The team should take the initiative to participate in external activities to showcase their products and/or services for brand building and business networking.
 - 7.3. The designated Account Manager will assist the team to establish and monitor milestone targets for business development.
 - 7.4. The team is required to submit written reports at agreed milestones, as well as a Business Report by the end of the pre-incubation period.
8. Exit (before Graduation³) from the Pi Centre
- 8.1. If a team wishes to change the execution plan during the incubation period (such change includes any change in team members), the team should submit an application to Pi Centre as early as possible through the Account Manager.
 - 8.2. Teams will be asked to leave the Pi Centre and terminated from the pre-incubation program if they fail to make the progress⁴ according to the agreed milestones, or substantially breaking any rule or condition as stipulated in the Admission Agreement.
9. Graduation from the Pi Centre
- 9.1. Teams are expected to graduate and leave the Pi Centre up to one year after admission.
 - 9.2. Startup teams should take the initiative to develop the product/ service and ready for launch, and develop a potentially sustainable business model, e.g. apply for external incubators or seek funding support.
10. Application for Extension
- 10.1. Application for Extension should be submitted to the Account Manager one month before the last day of the team's permissible stay at the Pi Centre.
 - 10.2. The Assessment Panel will review the Application and evaluate the performance of the team during its stay at the Pi Centre, including team capabilities, business model, value creation, and their new timeline with milestones in the extension period. The Panel will decide whether to approve the applications.
11. Confidentiality and Intellectual Property
- 11.1. Students shall retain proprietary rights to the execution plan in their applications for admission in accordance to CUHK rules and regulations.

³ Satisfactory completion of all milestones and ready to enter external incubators.

⁴ The Account Manager will monitor closely, and report to the Steering Group when the Account Manager thinks the team should exit. The Steering Group will make the final decision.

11.2. If any university intellectual property is involved, the team or the academic supervisor should make necessary arrangement (i.e. licensing) according to CUHK University IP Policy.

11.3. Applicants and members of the admitted teams are responsible for taking proper steps to protect their intellectual property. Teams having queries for intellectual property, copyright, or patent confidentiality may contact their Account Manager, or the Knowledge Transfer Office of CUHK.

C. Evaluation Criteria for Admission to the Pi Centre

- i. Team members should possess relevant skills, knowledge and know-how that are relevant to the proposed innovative idea and vision. Their openness and the ability to improve will also be considered.
- ii. Feasibility and marketability of the proposed product(s) and/or service(s).
- iii. Sustainability of the team and the venture idea.
- iv. Product(s) and/or service(s) should demonstrate the potential to create value to the community / relevant industry, in the form of human, social or monetary impact.
- v. Product(s) and/or service(s) should also carry a substantial degree of social responsibility.

D. Application Procedures

- i. A Principal Applicant should be assigned as the contact point with the University.
- ii. Application for admission to Pi Centre will be invited for submission starting from Jan 20, 2014. To catch the first batch of vetting, completed application form together with supporting information should reach the Knowledge Transfer Office (Room 301, Pi Ch'iu Building) or email address evalaw@cuhk.edu.hk **between 20 January 2014 (Monday) and 28 February 2014 (Friday)**. Please send both scanned copy and softcopy of the Application Form to facilitate data processing in the future.
- iii. Applications will be assessed and decided by an Assessment Panel comprising core members of CfE and CINTEC, and entrepreneurs or experts in the relevant field.
- iv. Admitted applicants/teams will be notified individually and the result will also be announced on the websites of [KTO](#) and [ACE Hub](#).

ENQUIRIES

For ACE Hub details:

Ms Serena GU
Project Manager
Center for Entrepreneurship
Email: serena@cuhk.edu.hk
Tel.: 3943 1691

In submitting applications:

Ms Vivian LEE
Assistant Manager
Innovations and Community Projects
Knowledge Transfer Office
Email: vivianym@cuhk.edu.hk
Tel.: 3943 6758