

本署檔號 OUR REF: UGC/GEN/379/01 V

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2 August 2004

Professor Paul CW Chu
President
The Hong Kong University of
Science and Technology
Clear Water Bay
Kowloon

cc. OCGA ✓ done 5/Aug 04

(Total: 12 pgs)

cc: Prof Liew Soung-Chang (CUHK)
Fax: 2603.5032
Prof Victor Li (HKU)
Fax: 2559.8738

Dear ~~Paul,~~
President,

(From Prof Roland Chin,
HKUST, 2004 Aug 12)

Areas of Excellence (AoE) Scheme
Monitoring and Assessment of Funded Projects

I am pleased to inform you that the Areas of Excellence Specialist Group (AoESG) of the University Grants Committee (UGC) has completed a review of the progress of the project "Information Technology". I am now writing to convey to you their comments and recommendations.

The Specialist Group has reviewed the progress of the project in the light of the assessment of the Monitoring and Assessment (M&A) Panel tasked to monitor the project. On the whole, the AoESG is satisfied that the project team has made reasonable efforts in substantiating the observations of the M&A panel in the site visit of December 2003. In particular, the team has generated promising research results arising from the redirected research efforts and achieved genuine collaboration across the participating institutions. The detailed comments and observations of the M&A panel are set out at the Annex.

Furthermore, the Specialist Group has decided to approve the 12-month project extension as requested by the project team in the spirit that the project time-line should be made as flexible as possible in order to enable a project to progress on solid grounds. The Secretariat will update the relevant record to reflect the revised project completion date of 31 December 2005.

In the light of the above considerations, the AoESG has approved that the final stage funding should be released as follows:


Project Title	Amount (\$M)	Submission of Next Progress Report
Information Technology	10.20	31 March 2005

The funds will be released under the normal accounting procedures shortly after this letter. The date shown above for the submission of the next progress reports is indicative only and is dependant on the completion of the next stage. The project team may propose adjustments to the time-frame to take into account the actual progress.

Notwithstanding the above, the AoESG would like to stress that, as always, funding is subject to evidence of satisfactory progress. Where a project has failed to demonstrate, through progress reports, its capacity to accomplish objectives, the AoESG will seriously consider withdrawing funding and terminating the UGC's support.

Should you have any questions about the reporting procedures or other matters, please contact Miss Veronica Wong (tel: 2844 9956 or email: vwong@ugc.edu.hk) for clarification.

Yours sincerely,



(Michael V Stone)
Secretary-General

c.c. Chairman, AoESG

Encl.

UGC Ref: AoE/E-01/99

**UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE
AREAS OF EXCELLENCE SCHEME**

**Annual Progress Report
Review Form (for use by *Lead Reviewer*)**

Stage : II

Period : April 2003 - March 2004

Project Title : Information Technology

[Except for the reviewer's identity, comments will be conveyed to the project team in full.]

1. Adherence to Project Objectives (Section 3)*

see 8

2. Achievement of Project Deliverables (Section 4)

see 8

3. Progress of Project / Research (Section 8.1)

see 8

4. Time Management (Section 5)

see 8

* Section number in bracket corresponds the same section of the progress reports

5. Use of Funding (Section 6)

see 8

6. Collaboration with other Institutions / Entities (Section 8.2)

see 8

7. Role and effectiveness of the management team (Section 8.3)

see 8

8. Other comments (if any)

The progress report substantiates the observations of the Review Panel during the site visit in Dec 03. The redirection of research efforts and the establishment of test bed have positioned the group to carry out potential breakthrough research. Initial research results are promising. There are true collaborations across the participating institutions. A large group of research students are being trained. See Site Visit Report for details.

The last stage of funding should be released to enable the group to capitalize on the investment already made in research infrastructure and personnel. The 12-month no-cost extension should be granted, as research project of this scale takes some time to establish momentum. The re-direction has also contributed to the delay.

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE
AREAS OF EXCELLENCE SCHEME

Annual Progress Report
Review Form

Stage : II
Period : April 2003 - March 2004
Project Title : Information Technology

[Except for the reviewer's identity, comments will be conveyed to the project team in full.]

1. Adherence to Project Objectives (Section 3)*
See "Other Comments".

2. Achievement of Project Deliverables (Section 4)
See "Other Comments".

3. Progress of Project / Research (Section 8.1)
See "Other Comments".

4. Time Management (Section 5)
See "Other Comments".

5. Use of Funding (Section 6)
See "Other Comments".

6. Collaboration with other Institutions / Entities (Section 8.2)
See "Other Comments".

* Section number in bracket corresponds the same section of the progress reports

7. Role and effectiveness of the management team (Section 8.3)
See "Other Comments".
-

8. Other comments (if any)

I read the latest self-assessment, but it really didn't tell me anything significantly different from what I saw at the site visit in December. That's not a surprise, since little time elapsed between the visit and the writing of the report. Thus, I can't say anything useful beyond what was said in December.

However, there is the new issue of a 12-month extension, which we did not talk about in December. It seems that the only choices are to (1) let the AoE organization use the money over the extended period, (2) reallocate it to support Computer Science in a different way, or (3) reallocate it to support other areas. The AoE seems to me finally to have built up some momentum and built an infrastructure. For the first time, I can concede that the organization might be superior to my own preferred way of supporting research (which falls under item (2) above --- give the money to bright researchers and give them the maximum leeway to choose their own directions).

As for choice (3), we must bear in mind that, although the world has changed in many ways in the 5 years that have elapsed since I was first acquainted with this project, Computer Science is still at the top of the list of technologies that contribute to economic well being. Perhaps only bio, or biomedical technology is comparable in importance. Thus, I think you should be happy to let them continue their project. You can be pretty sure that the return on the money will be about as high as you can expect from any alternative.

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE
AREAS OF EXCELLENCE SCHEME

Annual Progress Report
Review Form

Stage : II

Period : April 2003 - March 2004

Project Title : Information Technology

[Except for the reviewer's identity, comments will be conveyed to the project team in full.]

1. Adherence to Project Objectives (Section 3)*

Good

2. Achievement of Project Deliverables (Section 4)

Very Good

3. Progress of Project / Research (Section 8.1)

Very Good

4. Time Management (Section 5)

I approve of the extension requested.

* Section number in bracket corresponds the same section of the progress reports

5. Use of Funding (Section 6)

OK

6. Collaboration with other Institutions / Entities (Section 8.2)

Good

7. Role and effectiveness of the management team (Section 8.3)

Good

8. Other comments (if any)

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE
AREAS OF EXCELLENCE SCHEME

Annual Progress Report
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Stage : II

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Project Title : Information Technology

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1. Adherence to Project Objectives (Section 3)*

I think that the project team has adhered to the project objectives and has been responsive to the comments received from prior evaluations.

2. Achievement of Project Deliverables (Section 4)

Instead of thinking about the achievement as % of projects completed as listed in Section 4, I suggest that in the future the research team lists their significant research findings, so we can remember the "achievements" of the projects. It is hard to recall the results from the project given the way Section 4 was written. However, I'd like to note that the progress as summarized in Section 8 is good.

3. Progress of Project / Research (Section 8.1)

I found that the paper on the error in Jackson's networks particularly interesting. It appears that the authors may have discovered a result that has lasting value, and the authors seemed to be effective in publicizing the results. The progress on the high-impact projects, the internet test-bed, video servers, intrusion detection, and Cantonese spoken document retrieval, seems promising. I strongly recommend that we grant the requested no-cost extension so that the research can be completed.

4. Time Management (Section 5)

This appears to be fine.

5. Use of Funding (Section 6)

I have no issues with the use of funding.

6. Collaboration with other Institutions / Entities (Section 8.2)

There is more joint inter-institution research performed in recent years, and I hope that the researchers have found the experience worthwhile.

7. Role and effectiveness of the management team (Section 8.3)

The management team appears to be doing well.

8. Other comments (if any)

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[Except for the reviewer's identity, comments will be conveyed to the project team in full.]

- 1. Adherence to Project Objectives (Section 3)*
See "Other omments" _____
- 2. Achievement of Project Deliverables (Section 4)
See "Other omments" _____
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- 6. Collaboration with other Institutions / Entities (Section 8.2)
See "Other omments" _____

* Section number in bracket corresponds the same section of the progress reports

7. Role and effectiveness of the management team (Section 8.3)

See "Other omments"

8. Other comments (if any)

Overall the team made sufficient progress, so it is appropriate to continue funding the project.

With regard to the requested 12-month no-cost extension, I fully support this request. Projects of this size are difficult to start up, and I think it is better to wait hiring the right persons than to start hiring right after a proposal is improved.

Looking at the individual projects, I am still a little unconvinced of the approach to intrusion detection pursue by the project. The team deserves praise for picking an important, practical problem. However, I wonder if the researchers can describe accurately what kind of attack they will be able to detect, and what can be done to enlarge the class of attacks that can be detected. But rather than delay my response until this issue is settled (and the difficulty to identify a clear-cut counter-example may be another reason to invest more research funds in this area), I think the project should be "cleared" to proceed to the next stage.
