A Fundraising Call for the King's CICM Initiative

Background: King's College London, widely known as King's, is one of the two founding members of the federal University of London and is a world-leader in health science, education and innovation. According to the 2026 QS World University Rankings, King's is ranked no. 2, 5 and 9 in Nursing, Dentistry, Life Sciences & Medicine, respectively.

King's Centre for Integrative Chinese Medicine (CICM) is a research-focused interdisciplinary initiative of King's and its world-renowned teaching hospitals, which are collectively known as King's Health Partners (KHP).

King's CICM aims to meet major healthcare challenges through innovation, which will be catalysed by integrating wisdom, expertise, and resources from traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), conventional medicine and cutting-edge science and technology.

On 8th October 2024, the King's CICM initiative re-launched fundraising after a four-year pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and ragained KHP fundraising priority status on 8th October 2025. Goals of the campaign are as follows.

- **Stage 1:** To raise a £0.5m **King's CICM Empowerment Fund** by the end of 2026; and
- **Stage 2:** To raise a £5m **King's CICM Breakthrough Fund** by 2029.

To achieve these targets, the King's CICM initiative has updated its blueprint, operational plan and fundraising strategy in collaboration with the KHP fundraising team. King's CICM has developed a faculty that share interests in Integrative Chinese Medicine (ICM), with core research expertise in

- **Body-Mind Integrative Health;**
- **Cardiovascular Kidney Metabolic Health;**
- **Healthy Ageing, Cancer and Pharmaceutical Science; and**
- **Medical Humanities.**

The faculty is further supported by a prestigious Honorary Advisory Board (HAB) comprising 51 national and international leaders offering complementary expertise in ***Acupuncture***, ***TCM***, ***Herbal Medicine***, ***Pharmacy***, ***Pharmacognosy*** and ***Pharmacology***. The King's CICM fundraising will initially focus on opportunities to address *kidney disease*, *cardiovascular disease*, *cancer* and other *ageing-related disorders*. Our research remit will expand as our expertise grows.

- **In Stage 1**, a £0.5m **Empowerment Fund** will enable us to build the platform and network needed for the growth of the Centre, including team development, website, forums, as well as education and training endeavours. We propose that a £0.5m **Empowerment Fund** be partitioned to fulfil the following purposes:
    - £400k to support co-funded research projects
    - £50k to support CICM education, training and forum activities
    - £25k to support publications, academic meetings, dissemination and outreach, and
    - £25k to facilitate website development and fundraising activity.
- **In Stage 2**, a £5m **Breakthrough Fund** will enable further growth of the Centre by recruiting global talents and unlocking more opportunities for collaboration and resource integration. It will also allow for expanding the remit of CICM to cover more major areas of unmet needs and will deliver broader and deeper impacts. It is proposed that a £5m **Breakthrough Fund** be broken down to accomplish the following purposes:
    - £4m for sustainability: three academic and research positions created to recruit leaders at the frontiers of ICM

- £500k for co-funded projects covering all key themes
- £250k for ICM education, training and forum
- £125k supporting publication, meetings, dissemination and outreach, and
- £125k: website and fundraising activity.

King's CICM Projects

King's CICM supports innovation in medical education, research and care by integrating different medical philosophies, expertise and resources. Applying interdisciplinary, cutting-edge science and technology, **King's CICM projects focus on**:

- TCM-inspired biomedical innovation and mechanistic insight; and
- clinical studies assessing efficacy, safety and value; and
- translational work delivering innovative ICM products to meet unmet clinical needs.

This will span across the following 10 research priorities

1. Systemically cataloguing TCM-related collections of world-leading British libraries, museums, universities and research institutes to facilitate information exchange and support research, education and training.
2. Conducting surveys of patients, practitioners, care providers and other stakeholders in NHS hospitals, general practitioner services and TCM clinics to identify and address possible reasons for conflicts among different medical modalities and approaches, and gain the necessary evidence to guide ICM research, teaching and care.
3. Leading and participating in international collaborations to develop, disseminate and implement good practice guidelines and standards in integrative medicine research, and collaborations in authentication, quality control and exchange of medicinal plants, herbal drugs and other medicinal materials, as these activities are the foundation of high-quality traditional, complementary and integrative medicine.
4. Applying bioimaging, photoplethysmography (measuring blood volume in the peripheral circulation), pulse wave velocity and artificial intelligence to TCM inspection, tongue and pulse diagnostics, to innovate in clinical diagnosis.
5. Applying Bayesian methods, network pharmacology and artificial intelligence to TCM real-world data to identify signals of potential efficacy and safety concerns.
6. Conducting randomised controlled trials, value-based outcome studies, and target trial emulation to examine efficacy, effectiveness, safety and value of TCM and ICM interventions, notably incorporating TCM diagnosis-based stratification.
7. Conducting studies of endogenous defences of the kidney and other organs, as inspired by the TCM concepts of Healthy qi and Wei defensive qi, which defend against injury caused by pathogenic qi. This will enable the development of potential novel diagnostic, preventive, and therapeutic strategies.
8. Conducting knowledge-based studies of TCM tonifying drugs and non-drug therapies, including traditional acupuncture, electroacupuncture, moxibustion, acupoint laser radiation, medical qigong, etc, to drive innovation in prevention and therapeutics by stress reduction and by restoring compromised endogenous defence mechanisms.
9. Conducting multi-omics-based studies of cellular, genetic, epigenetic, and metabolic mechanisms of dysfunctional Yin qi and Yang qi that underpin disease, to guide targeted, personalised TCM and ICM intervention.
10. Contributing to introducing efficacious and safe traditional medicine products into the UK/European markets. This will foster the development and enrichment of integrative medicine by incorporating diverse health concepts, methodologies, and products.

World's Questions | King's Answers

Inspired by the award-winning **World's Questions | King's Answers** campaign (https://www.kcl.ac.uk/world-questions-kings-answers), we are keen to listen to a wide spectrum of ideas and opinions, ranging from patients, caregivers, general public and media, to the TCM community, KHP staff, King's CICM Honorary Advisors, collaborators and other stakeholders.

Based on the projects and approaches listed above, we are keen to engage in further dialogues and collaboration to develop an ICM-centric version of **World's Questions | King's Answers**, aiming to bring down barriers, facilitate dialogue and bridge collaboration to enable the types of ICM wanted by patients and the public.

Forward plan for fundraising

1. To establish a pool of donations aligned with donor-selected projects and purposes.





2. To establish the Peter Hylands Award and the Peter Houghton Award in honour of the late Professors Peter Hylands and Peter Houghton, two finest King's scientists and pioneers in ICM research. These awards will be used to (i) co-fund PhD students and post-doctoral fellows who can secure competitive external funding for further training at King's CICM, *e.g.,* Chinese Scholarship Council PhD Studentship or Postdoctoral Fellowship; and (ii) to recruit full-time academics and researchers. This plan has the support of the Hylands and Houghton families and the Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, King's College London, to which both Prof. Hylands and Prof. Houghton were affiliated.

- *The Peter Hylands Award* will support the application of cutting-edge technologies in ICM research & development; and
- *The Peter Houghton Award* will support pharmaceutical discovery from plants and other natural resources.

Tribute to Prof. Peter Hylands, Formerly Head of Institute of Pharmaceutical Science, King's College London; Co-Founder of the King's CICM initiative and Founding Treasurer, Board and Executive Council Member of the GP-TCM Research Association:

https://www.gp-tcm.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Jun-2019-GP-TCM-RA-NL.pdf

https://pharmaceutical-journal.com/article/news/tribute-peter-hylands

Mrs Debs Hylands: "Thank you so much for sending this proposal. It is incredibly exciting. Peter would be very happy."

Tribute to Prof. Peter Houghton, Professor of Pharmacognosy, King's College London; an international leader in medicinal plant and ethnopharmacology research:

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13880209.2024.2365210

https://apsgb.co.uk/people-news/in-memoriam-professor-peter-houghton-london-uk/

Mrs Joan Houghton: "…Peter was always very supportive of projects that facilitated a better understanding of different approaches to the gaining of knowledge leading to a more complete use of the resources to increase health and combat disease. Also, very close to Peter's heart was the education and nurture of young scientists who could become the leaders of the future. He had discussed with me the possibility of setting up some form of scholarship to enable those with talent and enthusiasm in this field to be able to travel and to meet with others who may help develop but also challenge their ideas. I am, therefore, wholeheartedly supportive of your proposal and gladly agree that Peter would be honoured to have his name attached to such a scholarship."





3. **To establish the Boying Ma Award and the Man Fong Mei Award** in honour of the late Professors Boying Ma (马伯英教授) and Man Fong Mei (梅万方教授), who have played important roles in developing ICM in the UK and internationally.

- *The Boying Ma Award* will support Medical History and Medical Humanities research.
- *The Man Fong Mei Award* will support ICM research with novel interdisciplinary features.

Tribute to Prof Boying Ma, Honorary Chairman and Founding President of Federation of TCM Practitioners (UK) and the author of *A History of Medicine in Chinese Culture* (in 2 volumes, 2019), who contributed greatly to the TCM History part of Dr Joseph Needham's book series *Science and Civilisation in China:*

https://ftcmp.co.uk/en/deep-mourning-for-the-famous-medical-historian-professor-ma-boying/

Dr Alicia Grant (Mrs Ma), author of *Globalisation of Variolation: The Overlooked Origins of Immunity for Smallpox in the 18th Century*: "Professor Ma, a western medical professor in Shanghai and a TCM practitioner in London, devoted his energy for 25 years to the furtherance of integration of ICM and TCM. Boying would have been honoured with the establishment of a research scholarship in his name in recognition of the above aim."

Tribute to Prof. Man Fong Mei, a Physics graduate of King's College London, who pioneered the development of the TCM industry in the UK, by founding AcuMedic and the Chinese Medical Institute and Register (CMIR) UK, one of the earliest, largest and most influential TCM hospitals, training centres and hubs for promoting dialogues and integration of different medical traditions: https://shop.acumedic.com/articles/post/the-inspirational-life-of-profesor-man-fong-mei/

Mr Don Mei, Prof. Mei's son and the current Director of Mei Group and all associated businesses and Chairman of CMIR: "(The proposal to set an award at Kings' CICM named after Prof. Man Fong Mei) is not only acceptable but an honour which I appreciate."

Estimated costs of fully or partially funded projects

Funding less than £60,000 will contribute to multilateral exchanges, education & training and research costs of pre-doctoral, doctoral and postdoctoral projects, including research conducting, data analysis, publication, dissemination, outreach and engagement programmes.

- **£1,000-£10,000:**
  - Pre-doctoral research costs of research internships and training projects of A-level, MBBS, BSc, MSc and MRes students.
  - Donations at this level can become important contributions to the Peter Hylands, Peter Houghton, Boying Ma and/or Man Fong Mei Awards.
    - We are most grateful for **a generous £3,000 gift from Dr Dan Jiang, one of our CICM Honorary Advisors**. This donation will contribute to the pool of funds dedicated to *the Peter Hylands, Peter Houghton, Boying Ma and Man Fong Mei Awards*.
  - King's CICM forums, at which high-quality evidence on efficacy, safety and scientific mechanisms of TCM intervention is disseminated to inform clinical practice (e.g., RCT Evidence Supporting an ICM Approach to Disease Prevention and Treatment); and TCM experts, NHS care-providers, academics, researchers and students gather and brainstorm. This will help break down barriers, facilitate dialogue, bridge collaboration, promote good practices and enable fusion of medical traditions in education, training, research and care.
    - Thanks to **an anonymous gift of £1,000 from a philanthropist** and **an excellent collaboration with the UK Centre of Chinese Medicine**, King's CICM was enabled to hold its 1st HAB Meeting and Inaugural Forum on the 5th Jan. 2025. *These hybrid sessions earmarked the official establishment of the HAB and served as platforms for King's CICM faculty, HAB and the audience to brainstorm. Collectively, these events harbingered a new era of King's CICM*.
    - We are deeply grateful for **a generous donation of £3,000 from Phoenix Medical Group Ltd**, which enabled the development of a dedicated King's CICM website, in both English (https://www.kingscicm.org/) and Chinese (https://chinese.kingscicm.org/), which will *play a crucial role in supporting fundraising, exchange, collaboration, innovation, dissemination and outreach.*
- **£10,000-£60,000:**
  - £10,000-£40,000: research cost of 1-4 person-years of Postdoctoral Scholarship.

- £40,000-£50,000: research cost of a PhD Scholarship of 4 years.
- £50,000-£60,000: research cost of 5-6 person-years of Postdoctoral Scholarship; research cost of up to 2 PhD Scholarships of 4 years;
- Donations at this level can be used to set up scholarships named after the donors. Alternatively, donations can be significant contributions to the Peter Hylands, Peter Houghton, Boying Ma and/or Man Fong Mei Awards.

- **Funding over £60,000** may contribute to all the above purposes. In addition, donations at this higher level may contribute to 50% funded or fully funded PhD and postdoctoral projects, and recruitment of staff who will drive CICM sustainable development.
  - **£65,000:** 50% funded 4 years of an endowed PhD Studentship (UK students).
  - **£130,000-£155,000:**
    - 50% funded 4 years of an endowed PhD Studentship (international students)
    - Fully funded 4 years of an endowed PhD Studentship (UK students) or
    - Fully funded 12-24 months of an endowed post-doctoral fellowship
  - **£250,000:** Fully funded 4 years of an endowed PhD Studentship (international students)
  - **£265,000:** Fully funded 2-3 years of an endowed post-doctoral fellowship.
  - **£405,000:** Fully funded 3-4 years of an endowed post-doctoral fellowship.
  - **£500,000-£1m:** 4-8 fully funded 4 years of an endowed PhD Studentship (UK students); 2-4 fully funded 4 years of an endowed PhD Studentship (international students); or 2-4 fully funded 2-3 years of an endowed post-doctoral fellowship.
  - **£1m-£3m:** 1-3 endowed lectureships or 3-10 three-year research positions.
  - **Over £3m:** An endowed professorship
  - **Centre named after the donor:** To be discussed.

Your support is important

King's is dedicated to delivering world-leading education, research and service. KHP's reputation in conventional medicine and health sciences is world-class. We are building a research-led integrative Chinese medicine platform, which will catalyse innovation for tackling major health threats, while reinforcing King's leadership in medical innovation and advancing global health.

Realising this vision will require ambition, collaboration and sustained support. We invite you to share this opportunity with others who may be inspired to join us on this journey — and to consider how you, too, might play a part in shaping the future of integrative medicine.

We'd love to hear from you

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