



الجامعة العربية المفتوحة
Arab Open University

AOU RESEARCH GRANT POLICY

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Glossary of Terms

AOU:	Arab Open University
Branch:	Branch of AOU
BRDC:	Branch Research Development Committees
CRDC:	Central Research Development Committee
CRO:	Central Research Office
Dean:	Dean of a college in AOU
H.Q.:	The headquarter of AOU
RFA:	Research funding advisor
University:	Arab Open University

Grants (by order of appearing)

ARG:	Applied Research Grant
SG:	Seed Grant
CICP:	Community-Industry Collaboration Fund)
ECNSG:	Early Career and New Staff Grant
IRG:	Institutional Research Grant
REA:	Research Excellence Award
SCG:	Symposia and Conference Grant

AOU RESEARCH GRANT POLICY

PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to establish the governing management system of research funding at the AOU. It applies to all research conducted by University members of staff (as individuals, groups or in collaboration with others from outside the University) and students that requires internal or external resources

1- PURPOSE AND MAJOR TYPES OF RESEARCH FUNDING

Purpose of Research Funding

- Contributes to furthering knowledge through high quality research relevant to AOU's mission and strategies.
- Enhances collaboration with the community, government, industry and institutions of higher education and research to identify and find solutions to economic and societal problems.
- Advances knowledge of members of staff, which, in turn, enhances student learning experiences.
- Helps recruiting prominent members of staff.

Major Types of Research Funding

AOU researchers can tap on two major types of research funding:

- Internal research grants; which come from University budget as allocation based on income;
 - External funding; which may take the form of research grant, research contract or research gift.
- * Research grant: funds awarded for the performance of self-directed research; usually offered on a competitive basis, requires reporting and may pose restrictions on use of funds, but most likely will have no legal ramifications on performance.
- * Research contract: funds awarded on the basis of legally binding agreement that includes conditions and terms on direction of the research, time-frame, financial regimen, ownership of right to research results, etc.
- * Research gift: while may be awarded for a specific purpose, normally it entails no reporting, no specific time duration and no restrictions on how the fund may be used.

2- MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH FUNDING

Three entities are responsible for the management of research funding: Central Research Office (CRO), Branch Research Development Committees (BRDCs) and Central Research Development Committee (CRDC). Their tasks pertinent to management of internal grants and external funding are listed below. Their other functions appear on 'AOU Research Policy'. Detailed guidelines and procedures of internal and external grant management are specified in 'Research Grant Management Manual'.

Central Research Office

In relations to research funding, the CRO's overall responsibility is to help with administration of internal grants and external funding both at the pre-award and post-award phases. Specifically, CRO:

- acts as a repository of all information on internal and external grants;
- announces, receives and administratively processes applications for internal grants that are managed centrally, and ensures their compliance with the rules and conditions;
- works with CRDC and BRDCs in compiling and updating lists of external funding providers;
- administers the research portal which entails, among other things, updating information on internal and external funding and updating information on status of funding applications that are managed centrally;
- assists, together with branch Research Funding Advisors (RFAs), in the preparation of proposals for external funding and in organising training in proposal writing skills;
- ensures, together with other relevant bodies at the University, compliance with all legal and administrative requirements and rules in the proposals submitted for external funding; in the management of awards received and in the final reporting (for details see Research Grant and Contract Management Manual).

Branch Research Development Committee

In relation to research funding, the BRDC

- organises regular training for members of staff in proposal writing;
- in collaboration with the CRDC, trains a number of members of staff as RFAs capable of assisting in identification of relevant internal and external funding opportunities for potential applicants, and in the preparation of pre-proposals and final proposals for research funding;
- receives and reviews, accepts or rejects or asks for amendment of applications for internal grants that are administered by the branch, in line with the conditions set in the calls for submission, within the limits of set budget and in conformity with University-wide rules and guideline;

- encourages and supports members of staff to seek external funding, and compiles and updates a registry of funding agencies and programmes, especially in the country of the branch;
- monitors progress and timely completion of internally and externally funded research in accordance with the set conditions and expectations attached to the grant offer.

Central Research Development Committee

In relation to research funding, the CRDC

- receives and reviews, accepts or rejects or asks for amendment of applications for central research grants, on the basis of conditions announced in the calls for submission, within the set budget and in conformity with University priorities, rules and guidelines;
- establishes and updates a central registry of regional and international research funding agencies and programmes;
- encourages and supports inter-branch and inter-college applications for external funding;
- assesses inter-branch applications to organise symposia and conferences, and selects on the basis of University priorities and within identified budget limits.

3. INTERNAL RESEARCH GRANTS

3.1 Framework and General Principles

Priority

Four types of research may be identified: pure basic research; strategic basic research, applied research and experimental development research. While all of these types merit research funding, AOU research grants target applied research in the first place. Such priority is entailed by the University's mission and endeavour to contribute to knowledge advancement that supports economic and social development (broadly defined).

Equal Opportunity

Different grant types fulfil different purposes. However, all research awards provided are assessed on a competitive basis. Grants are announced periodically (four times in a year; September, December, March and June) through the research portal and by e-mails sent to all those who are entitled to avail of them. A transparent system of assessment and selection follows guidelines provided in the Research Grant Management Manual.

Eligibility to Apply

All full-time academic members of staff, whose contract will be valid for the duration of the grant, and/or is anticipated to be renewed, can apply for research grants. Certain categories of full-time management or administrative members of staff can also apply, if the project is relevant to their present or future areas of responsibility (and the condition of contract status mentioned above also applies to them).

Publication of research Outcome

Most of grants are offered with the expectation of the recipient(s) producing high quality, publishable material. In assessing proposals, the relevant committee thoroughly examines the publication potential of research outcomes. Members of staff failing to produce a publication resulting from a grant received, when this is expected and specified in the research grant agreement, may be denied further access to internal funds.

3.2 Grant Approval and Budget

AOU makes available branch and central budget to support research projects. BRDCs are to receive, review, select and finance projects up to USD 10,000. Some types of grant, as is shown below, have stated budget cap. Above USD 10,000 limit, eligible projects are to be directed to the CRDC through the specified route (see Research Grant and Contract Management Manual). All projects involving multi-campus initiatives fall in the domain of the CRDC.

Both central and branch budget are to specify in advance the proportion of the budget that will be allocated for each type of research grant programme. For budget purpose, it is allowed to combine a maximum of two types under one budget item; and some flexibility is guaranteed, within certain limits specified in the budget scheme, and on the basis of reasoned justifications, to move funds from a research grant type to another.

3.3 Internal Grant Types

Internal grants are meant to promote scholarly research activity of members of staff for the purpose of advancing knowledge and to strengthen relevance of research to social and economic development. To this endeavour, different types of grant programmes are identified; each fulfilling a certain objective.

Applied Research Grant (ARG)

ARG is meant to foster University relevance to, and links with industry and community, and may mainly finance projects that are unable to generate external funding. Its goal is to contribute to finding solutions to societal and economic problems, and, at the same time, strengthen research excellence of the University. All members of staff are eligible to apply to the ARG. Successful individual projects may be funded to a maximum of USD 10,000, and branch multi-staff projects may apply for grant up to a maximum of USD 15,000. Multi-branch initiatives may seek funding from the H.Q., and/or jointly from the branches sponsoring the project.

Seed Grant (SG)

SG can be applied to for the purpose of collecting data needed to develop proposals to be submitted for external funding. Such grant will only be considered if the project has a strong potential of generating extramural funds in areas of research relevant to University priorities, and is offered up to a maximum of USD 5000.

Community-Industry Collaboration Fund (CICF)

This Fund supports new or existing research initiatives to start or expand research collaboration with community and/or industry. It is based on joint funding, may involve joint research, and the external funding must provide in cash at least 50% of the cost of the project. Projects funded under CICF must be innovative in nature; creating new solutions. Projects based on routine application of solutions already discovered will not be considered under this Fund.

CICF also includes projects that have or have not received previous grants, which require final funding to demonstrate their commercial viability. A judgement on such status is to be pursued from relevant industry-based experts.

Early Career and New Staff Grant (ECNSG)

This grant is earmarked for two purposes: to encourage early career members of staff (below Assistant Professor rank) to further their career development, and to support new members of academic staff, regardless of their rank, to accomplish research projects relevant to the University priorities. ECNSG can be provided up to USD 3000 for individual projects and up to USD 5000 for joint projects (provided that recipients are all early career and/or new members of staff).

Institutional Research Grant (IRG)

This grant programme is intended to fund projects that evaluate University or a specific branch performance and relevance in one or more specific area, and/or that explore new ways of fostering excellence and relevance of the University/branch. Initiation of projects in these areas may come from the University H.Q., a branch, or from individual (or a group of) members of staff. When the project is relevant to one branch only, funding is to be sought from, and granted to successful projects by the branch. When it targets the whole University, funding may also be requested from the H.Q. Applications for IRG funding can be made at any time, and will be considered subject to availability of funds.

Research Excellence Award (REA)

REA is awarded not only on recognition of outstanding research contribution by members of staff, but also to support their current or future research work. It is awarded annually to one staff in each college as a research gift that does not specify any particular research project (but has to be used on research). Each year nomination to the award comes by end of December from the Dean of each college, who will rely on a panel from within the college, and will be assessed by the CRDC, which may resort to external

advice. The award can be withheld, if no suitable candidate is found in a particular college in a particular year. The amount of the award is USD 3000.

Symposia and Conference Grant (SCG)

The University encourages organisation of research symposia, seminar series and conferences that aim at promoting research excellence in areas of priority to the branch and/or the University. Funding priorities are for symposia and conferences that can yield publishable material in form of papers, monographs or books. Organisers in such undertakings may seek supplementary extramural funding and sponsorship. Receiving such external funds may also corroborate relevance/importance of subject/theme selected. A symposium or seminar series may receive a grant up to USD 2500, and a conference can apply for a maximum of USD 5000 grant. This does not include regional or international conferences organised centrally, budget of which comes from central budget.

Members of staff intending to present papers to conferences outside the University may apply to this grant programme. Papers are to be judged as of high quality and have a strong potential to be published. Maximum budget for conference participation is USD 2000.

4. EXTERNAL FUNDING

The University encourages and supports applications for external funding. Lists of external funding agencies, with access to their programmes, are compiled and updated regularly. The Seed Grant programme is meant to increase the opportunity to receive external funds, and so is the funding-matching programme; Community-Industry Collaboration Fund. Members of staff are continuously trained to develop their proposal writing skills, and can be assisted in developing proposals by trained RFAs and by the CRO. The CRO, BRDCs and CRDC may help in negotiating with funding agencies and partners, in addition to their stated roles above (2.1, 2.2, and 2.3).

Recipients of extramural funds may apply for full or partial relief from teaching and/or management responsibilities for a certain period, if received funds pay for their salary in full or part.

5. PUBLICATION SUPPORT

The CRDC may review applications to subsidise book publication arising from symposia or conferences organised by members of staff or centrally, as may be demanded by some publishers. Intended publishers are to be highly reputable regionally or internationally, and the publication may be considered as of high value to knowledge advancement and to the reputation of the University. External referees are to be engaged (also) by the University in assessing the quality of the publication. The amount of subsidy for successful applications is negotiated case by case.

6. RESEARCH PORTAL

The Research portal is a repository of all information pertinent to research at the AOU. In relation to research grants and contracts, it contains all information on internal research funding, including calls for submission of applications, lists of extramural research funding agencies and their programmes and announcements, policies procedures, committees/offices and personnel related to AOU research grant management, online training on proposal writing and lists of projects previously and currently funded, among other things. The portal allows for on-line applications to internal grants, and applicants can follow on-line progress of decision-making related to their application. It also allows submitting reports, as may be required, on project progress.

The research portal includes “Research Repository”. It is connected to the AOU e-library and Google.

Reference List

Adelaide University: <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/rb/apply-funding>

Belmont University: www.belmont.edu/grants

City University of Hong Kong: www.cityu.edu.hk/ro

Georgia State University: ursa.research.gsu.edu/.../funding/funding-opport

Griffith University: <https://www.griffith.edu.au/...grants/funding.../internal..>

Melbourne University: <https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1021>

Rutgers University: <https://orsp.rutgers.edu/>

Simon Fraser University: www.sfu.ca/policies/research/r10-01.html

Tufts University: www.tufts.edu/home/research/funding_grants

University of California: www.ucop.edu › ... › *Research Grants Program Office*

University of Texas at Austin: <https://www.utexas.edu/.../awards-fellowshi..>

University of Western Australia: <http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/staff/funding>

Utah University: research.utah.edu/grants

Vanderbilt University: research.vanderbilt.edu/policy/internal-grants/

Victoria University of Wellington: www.victoria.ac.nz/.../research-policies

Wayne State University: <http://provost.wayne.edu/faculty-staff/awards.php>

