

Internally Funded Research Project Policy

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Policy Statement:

The high cost of conducting research could be one of the impediments to increasing the research output in relatively new and smaller higher education institutions in the Kingdom. By realizing this factor, Al Yamamah University (YU) management has devised a clear strategy to support in-house faculty research by allocating a significant share of the research budget for internally funded research projects. The research project could be managed by a single author/researcher or a group of researchers from Al Yamamah University and other institutions. The principal investigator must be from YU's faculty list, but other team member(s) could be from external institutions. In the case of a research team, a minimum of two faculty members from YU should be represented in the research team composition. It is expected that the final output of research carried out under this scheme is either published in reputed journals, converted into influential reports, developed into a product, or registered for a patent under YU name. The criteria, procedures and entitlements are laid out in the following paragraphs and a guideline as **Appendix A**.

Criteria:

1. The principal investigator and other YU author(s) must mention YU as a sole affiliated institution to be qualified for full funding consideration.
2. Dual-affiliated principal investigators are eligible to apply for the research financial support that Al Yamamah University provides on a merit basis to its own single-affiliated, full-time faculty members. This financial support is subject to the following three conditions:
 - a) The principal investigator must be from YU faculty list.
 - b) 50% of the project cost approved if Al Yamamah University is listed as the primary institution and 25% in case of secondary institution.
 - c) All Al Yamamah University's research-related policies and regulations should be satisfied.



3. All research proposals must have clear and achievable objectives, detailed budgets, and timelines, as well as contingencies for completing the projects even if funding sources have been exhausted. In addition, the proposals should identify which existing staff, as well as additional staff, will be needed, and by what percentage for the project and for how long.
4. The results of the research generally belong to the researcher, for purposes of publication(s), but a final report must be submitted to the University.
5. All YU funded research projects must have a final report submitted to the college research committee and approved.
6. Final report for YU funded research projects must be reviewed and approved by the Council for Graduate Studies and Research.

Procedures:

If faculty members are interested in carrying out research funded by Al Yamamah University, the following procedures are laid out as a general guideline:

1. Faculty members must fill-in a formal request form and send it to the respective college dean alongside a comprehensive research proposal highlighting the following:
 - a) topic being researched.
 - b) gaps in existing knowledge (products).
 - c) constraints and costs including remuneration of investigator(s).
 - d) research method, plan, milestone, achievable outputs, and detailed budget.
 - e) personal statement explaining how the requested funds will help him/her (them) in improving the research/teaching standards.
 - f) potential new income streams for the University.
 - g) welfare of society in general.
2. The dean shall forward the request and proposal to the college research committee to review the request and either suggest changes or forward a recommendation after an approval from the YU Research Ethic Committee to the Council for Graduate Studies and Research for further assessment.



3. The Council for Graduate Studies and Research shall evaluate the request and recommendation and make a judgment based on a variety of factors such as:
 - a) The needs of YU (research, teaching, potential brand promotion).
 - b) Financial implications (cost/benefit analysis).
 - c) In-house resource availability and individual(s) contributions to YU academic and administrative activities (for at least over a year at YU).
 - d) Future monetary benefits (if any) for the University.
4. In the case of approval, the proposal shall be put on external reviewer scrutiny by one or more experts in the field to evaluate, comment and score the proposal on a scale of 1 to 10. The Director of the Research office coordinates this external evaluation process.
5. The outcome of the external evaluation shall be presented to the Council for Graduate Studies and Research. The Council evaluates the recommendation and either rejects the request or approves it (subject to a minimum score of 7 out of 10).
6. The recommendations from the Council shall be sent to the President's Office. The President's Office shall evaluate all the paperwork and make a final decision in this regard.

Entitlements

1. Each faculty member is entitled to participate in up to two internally funded projects over the entire academic year period. To avoid conflicts of interest, the President, VP, and Deans along with administrative staff are not eligible for internally funded research projects.
2. The duration of internally funded projects is one year with a maximum cost of up to SAR 50,000 per project including remuneration for the principal investigator and additional co-investigators, secretarial and other support, facilities, equipment, hardware/software, books, journals, stationary/supplies, laboratory equipment, and transportation costs for

surveys (if any). The President could, however, increase the allocation of funds for such project on the recommendations of YU Council for Graduate Studies and Research. The manpower cost should be capped to a 40% of the total cost. The remaining 60% could be allocated for other research related non-manpower cost components. The manpower cost will be paid upon publishing a good quality paper that is in line with the submitted research proposal for the project. In case of double affiliation, YU's regulation about double affiliation and related benefits shall apply.

3. If the project cannot be completed within the one-year period, the principal investigator should submit an extension request to the relevant college dean and research committee before the end of the 11th month of the project. Such a request must be justified and supported by evidence. The duration of the entire project, including any justified extensions, shall not exceed two years altogether.



Exceptions

The University Council reserves the right to decide on any situation/circumstance outside of the conditions stated in this policy.

Authorization

This policy was authorized by:



University President

Date: 15-10-2024

Appendix A: Guidelines for YU Internally Funded Research Grants

A. Introduction

In addition to several other initiatives, YU has formulated a strategy to help faculty members in meeting the relatively high-cost research in terms of conducting surveys, collection/purchase of data, purchasing of a new software and other high costs. Internally funded Research Grants are one of the schemes in this regard that are open-type research grants with budgets not exceeding **SR 50,000** and durations of the projects approximately 12 months or less. YU faculty members could apply for this grant any time during the academic year. Each faculty member is entitled to participate in two such projects per academic year.

B. Research Proposal Development and Submission

The Principal Investigator (PI) is expected to follow the guidelines contained in the research policy document on internally funded research projects in preparing and submitting the research proposal. This includes topic being researched, gaps in existing knowledge (products), constraints and costs including remuneration of investigator(s), research method, plan, milestone, achievable outputs, personal statement explaining how the requested funds will help him/her (them) in improving the research/teaching standards, potential new income streams for the University, and welfare of the society in general. For projects with more than one investigator, the role of each investigator should be clearly identified in the proposal. A detailed budget sheet needs to be prepared and attached with the proposal. The budget sheet shall cover the cost of manpower, equipment/software, supplies and overheads with complete details and justifications wherever applicable.

C. Review & Evaluation Process - Criteria for Acceptance of Research Proposal

1. YU policy on internally funded research projects clearly defines the procedure for the evaluation of research proposals. This suggested mechanism shall be followed for each application irrespective of academic/administrative title of the applicant.



2. Broadly speaking, the final decision to accept/reject of the proposal shall be taken by the YU management considering the parameters such the needs of YU (research, teaching, potential brand promotion), financial implications (cost/benefit analysis), in-house resource availability and individual(s) contributions to YU academic and administrative activities (for at least over a year at YU) and future monetary/non-monetary benefits for the University. More specifically, evaluation is based on the following factors:

- i. The project will result in publishable research output (minimum 1 paper in a high-quality journal).
- ii. The project will significantly contribute to existing knowledge.
- iii. The project will contribute to areas of specialization of the investigator(s).
- iv. The project will make an impact on and contribution to education in the University.
- v. The project is (fully or partially) part of the research thrusts of the College/University/Country (national and YU's research priority areas).
- vi. The investigator has the required capability and skill set to undertake and complete a research project.

D. Research Budget Development – A Guideline

Except for manpower cost, YU shall be flexible in terms of itemized budget allocations of the total cost of the project (Table 1). However, excluding the exceptions, the following guidelines are provided as an example and utmost effort shall be made to follow this guideline in preparing budget. University Research Council, the Council for Graduate Studies and Research, and VP/President has the authority to adjust the figures considering the comments from different stakeholders/scholars (internal & external). The final budget approved, and project approval decision shall be conveyed by the memo from the Center for Research and Consulting.



Table 1: Sample budget template for an internally funded research project (one year duration):

#	Item	Total cost
1	<i>Manpower: capped to a maximum of 40%</i>	20000
2	<i>Stationery</i>	400
3	<i>Standard desktop/laptop</i>	5000
4	<i>Books & reference materials</i>	1600
5	<i>Publication cost</i>	8000
6	<i>Local scientific visit (within KSA)</i>	2000
7	<i>International conference</i>	7000
8	<i>Overheads</i>	6000
	Total	50000

Notes. Except manpower cost, allocations for other components could be adjusted upon approval from the college research committee. In case of publication cost, only 50% cost re-imburement shall be made if the journal has free publication option. An utmost effort shall be made by the authors to opt for free publication option.

Monitoring of Research Budget

The following important points are to be followed strictly for the duration of the study (project).

- i. The total disbursement of the funds is limited to only approved budget.
- ii. Funds approved for one project shall not be allocated for another project unless approved by the President Office.
- iii. Fund disbursement is subject to the timely submission of the final report and published paper.
- iv. It is desired that financial settlement should be supported by acceptable cash invoices/original official receipts.
- v. Checks for project equipment /supplies must be submitted with a corresponding Materials Requisition Form signed by the Principal Investigator, countersigned by VP Office
- vi. Cash advances for up to 10% of the approved budget may be requested for materials and supplies and other expenditures.



E. Inception of the Project

Upon the final approval of the project and issuing of memo, Principal Investigator is expected to start immediately working on the project. The Principal Investigator shall sign a Project Agreement Form available through Research Director Office within one week of the receipt of the memo of approval. In case of any delay in starting of the approved project, the Principal Investigator is obliged to provide a written explanation to the Research Director Office who would convey this to the President and Vice President Office. Approval could be cancelled from the President Office in case of extended delay in the starting up of project. Once the work has started, the Principal Investigator and co-investigator are not allowed to transfer the project to another faculty member without proper approval from the President Office. In cases where the co-investigator has retired, has resigned, goes on study leave, the main investigator will take over the project and see to its completion. The Principal Investigator must complete the research project within the approved period.

F. Project Report

On the completion of the project, researchers (Principal Investigator and co-investigator) are required to submit a Final Report with executive summary to the college research committee within one month of the completion deadline. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the Final Report is submitted within the period allowed. In exceptional circumstances, the submission date may be extended, but any requests must be made in writing, and approved by the college research committee before the original submission period expires. The non-submission of the final report after the one-month period may result in the non-payment of the final installment of the compensation and can affect future funding requests submitted by the Principal Investigator. The Final report could be in TWO forms. Firstly, in the case of the study findings published in journals, the report shall include the published paper(s). Secondly, in the case of project findings not published until the completion date, a detailed report needs to be submitted highlighting the significance and utility of the paper for the University/economy/society and literature in the researched area and a timeframe for potential publications/use of the research findings.



G. Acknowledgements and Returns of Equipment

It is expected that a proper acknowledgment of YU shall be made in terms of financial support along with project numbers in all forms of publications and other outcomes. Failure to do so could result in significantly reducing the chances of getting approval for internally funded research projects again in future. Accordingly, any publications or other outcomes with no acknowledgement of the project funding from YU would not be considered as part of that project.

Before purchasing any essential equipment for the project, the Principal Investigator should first consult with the IT department to check if equipment with the required specifications is already available.

After completing the project, the Principal Investigator must return all equipment, including laptops or computers (whether newly purchased by the Principal Investigator or borrowed from the IT department) to the Director of Research. The Director will then return the equipment to the relevant department (lab or IT) for future use by other researchers.

