ANNUAL UNIVERSITY RESEARCH GRANT GUIDELINE

1. **Status:**
   Revised and endorsed by the 36th RIC Meeting in 6th December 2021
   Revised and endorsed by the 32nd RIC Meeting in 25th December 2020
   Revised and endorsed by the 24th RIC Meeting in 6th November 2018
   Revised and endorsed by the 23rd RIC Meeting in 8th August 2018
   Revised and endorsed by the 22nd RIC Meeting in 12th December 2017
   Revised and endorsed by the 17th RIC Meeting in November 2014
   Revised and endorsed by 19th RIC in April 2016
   Approved by the 36th Academic Board Meeting in August 2016
   Approved by the 11th RIC Meeting in March 2012
   Revised and endorsed by the 36th RIC Meeting in 6th December 2021

2. **Definition of Research Block Grant:** A **Research Block Grant** is a competitive research grant annually administered by the Department of Research and External Relations, where available annual research funding is distributed to individual researcher or research teams through merit-based and peer-reviewed processes. Such research grants will be distributed based on the research output of the individual researchers or research teams which will be monitored through the successful submission of research output on regular interval.

3. **Rationale for Block Grant**

   3.1. **Research Block grant** will encourage more practice-oriented research (action research) that is carried out in one's own classrooms, field or laboratories within the college campus. The outcomes of such research works would have positive impact on the teaching-learning processes, thereby improving the quality of the programmes offered at all the member colleges.

   3.2. **Research Block Grant** will allow making payment to faculty who carry out on-campus action and experimental based research because they also spend nearly an equal amount of time compared to other forms of research. In the long run this is likely to encourage faculty in conducting action and experimental-oriented research related to their teaching-learning processes.

   3.3. Since the research **block grant** is going to be output-based, i.e. payment based on the research output of the faculty, it will completely get rid of the time academics spend getting involved in administrative procedures such as submitting the expenditure bills and instead the focus will gainfully shift to research output.

4. Annual University Research Grant

4.1. The Department of Research and External Relations (DRER) will set aside Nu. 3.500 million every year to support research in the member colleges. These funds (which will depend on a yearly basis) will be used to support (among others) high quality research proposals from individuals or a team of researchers that will help build the research profile of the University. These grants will be known as the Annual University Research Grant (AURG).

5. **Objectives of the AURG**

   5.1. To promote knowledge based society;

   5.2. To promote the overall research culture amongst the member colleges of the RUB;

5.3. To promote the importance of research based teaching and learning culture;

5.4. To increase research productivity of the faculty/staff under each of the categories identified;

5.5. To support, on a competitive basis, high quality projects, aligned to the University's research priorities;

6. Category of Grant

6.1. In order to distribute these grants through a just and fair means, the University will categorize (with the help of each college) the entire faculty/research staff into three groups based on their individual research profile as of December each year. (Faculty/staff research profile will be up-dated at the end of every year). The three categories are:

6.1.1. Category 1: Beginner Researcher (BR);

6.1.2. Category 2: Mid-Career Researcher (MCR); and

6.1.3. Category 3: Advanced Career Researcher (ACR).

6.2. ***Beginner Researchers*** **(BR)** are defined as faculty/staff without any research experience and have no publication record to date but have attended in-house research capacity building workshops.

6.3. ***Mid-Career Researchers*** **(MCR)** are defined as faculty/staff with:

6.3.1. Master/PhD/EdD qualification and

6.3.2. two peer reviewed publication, and

6.3.3. One seminar/conference proceeding or one additional peer reviewed journal

Note: For Dzongkha faculty a minimum of 5 publications in reliable periodicals will be considered.

6.4. ***Advanced Career Researchers*** **(ACR)** are defined as faculty/staff having:

6.4.1. More than 10 non-peer reviewed publication with one or two peer reviewed publication OR

6.4.2. Minimum of 10 peer reviewed publications OR

6.4.3. Must have led at least two research consultancies, OR led three seminar/conference proceedings.

6.5. All applications for the AURG will be considered on a competitive basis within their respective categories. Therefore, applicant/s from each category will compete within their respective category identified above.

7. Learning Teaching and Assessment

As of 2019, research grant focused on research related to learning, teaching and assessment will be categorized. To apply for this grant the applications must fulfill the following:

7.1. Applicant's proposals should have Principal Investigator (PI) that fulfills MCR and/or ACR category of AURG;

7.2. Preference will be given to group/team applicants of the research proposals themed on Learning, Teaching and Assessment;

7.3. CRC will check the quality and standard of a research proposal.

8. **Funding Allocations**

8.1. With effect from FY 2022-23, the number of awards and amount of each research grants are revised.

8.2. Including the proposal application specific to Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) the number of AURG awards against each category and the amount for each award is improved as follows.

8.3. Funds will be allocated as follows:

8.3.1. Up to Nu. 0.100 million for Category 1: Beginner Researcher (BR);

8.3.2. Up to Nu. 0.125 million for Category 2: Mid-Career Researcher (MCR);

8.3.3. Up to Nu. 0.150 million for Category 3: Advanced Career Researcher (ACR);

Note- (The upper ceiling for each category has been fixed based on the total research budget currently available at DRER- 3.500 million. For College Research Grants, respective colleges could fix their own ceiling and the number of grants under each category).

8.4. The DRER, with Nu. 3.500 million funding support will provide an appropriate allocation of grants to support the AURG – support up to 15 BR grants, up to 10 MCR grants and at least 5 ACR grants annually.

8.5. In case, the number of grants allocated to a particular category is not fully utilized or if there isn't enough applicant from a particular category, the remaining grant/s could be allocated to the other categories.

8.6. A particular college may provide a matching fund from the College Research Fund (CRF) in case a project exceeds the AURG ceiling.

8.7. Total funding requested may not be awarded in full if the Review Committee is not satisfied with the proposed budget.

8.8. The approved funds for each research project will be released directly to the respective colleges and the colleges in turn will release these funds based on their modality.

8.9. To save some academic/intellectual input time of the faculty researcher, provision for hiring research assistants for that specific project, especially to administer survey questionnaire, transcribe interview data and punching survey data will be considered.

8.10. Modality of payment release maybe based on the submission of research reports in a manner worked out by respective colleges.

9. Eligibility Criteria

9.1. Any regular faculty/staff or teams from RUB colleges are eligible.

9.2. A particular faculty/staff will be eligible to be a Principal Researcher (PI) for not more than one project in a given year for the AURG. However, a Principal Researcher (PI) can be a member of the research team for not more than two projects.

9.3. A particular faculty/staff will be eligible to be a member of the research team for not more than two AURG projects at the given time.

9.4. In case a beginning researcher team research does not progress as expected, then a senior faculty or researcher belonging to Category 2 and Category 3 could be requested to be the Principal Researcher and.

9.5. University students and external body will not be eligible to apply for the grant.

10. Criteria for Selection

The quality of the proposed research project (research that aims to– discover new knowledge, provide a solution to an important practical or theoretical problem/s, a significant conceptual advance in the field of study, methodologies that are consistent with best international practices, representing significant methodological advance in the field, conforms to ethical practices in research);

10.1. Projects are directly relevant to improving teaching and learning and/or enhancing faculty/staff discipline specific knowledge;

10.2. Team projects and/or multidisciplinary approach with two to four members;

10.3. The quality of research track record of the researcher or the research team members;

10.4. Outcomes from any previous research grants (internal or external);

10.5. The likelihood of the proposed research project leading to significant publications; and

10.6. The proposed research focuses on the College research priority areas.

11. Procedures for proposal calls

11.1. R&D Division, DRER will make the call for proposal by end of January via RUB website and the same information will be sent to Colleges;

12. Procedures for Submission

12.1. The researcher(s) will submit a research proposal to DRIL office by end of February every year;

12.2. All grant proposals should be submitted following the Annual University Research Grant Application Form. The AURG Application Form is attached as Annexure 1.

12.3. DRIL Office will verify the qualification of the primary investigators according to the category applied;

12.4. DRIL Office will cross check if the primary investigator has any incomplete or ongoing AURG grant award, if there is, then the proposal will be disqualified for the current fiscal year;

12.5. DRIL with support CRC will review all proposals submitted and make decision on the quality of the proposal including the time period and amount applied as mentioned in the Section 8 Criteria for selection of AURG guidelines;

12.6. DRIL will submit the qualified proposals to R&D Division, DRER by end of April every year;

12.7. The submission document must include:

12.7.1. A forward letter from the Chair of CRC;

12.7.2. AURG Application Form(s) in word format;

12.7.3. AURG Database Form (Annexure).

13. Evaluation Processes

13.1. R&D, DRER will compile and prepare all proposals for evaluation by removing name of investigator(s);

13.2. All applications will undergo blind review process as per the evaluation form (Annexure 2).

13.3. Proposals will be clubbed into thematic areas and include an expert from each theme as evaluators (at max 5 evaluators), evaluators will review all proposals to maintain consistency.

13.4. The evaluation committee will exercise discretionary power for beginning researchers in case the reviewers have not recommended for funding. Reviewers' feedback will have to be provided to the applicant for further improvement.

13.5. The award of research grant shall be based on the individual reviewers' recommendations and the final decision of the review committee.

13.6. Evaluation of AURG will be completed by the beginning of June every year;

13.7. Successful applicants will be informed of the decision of the review committee through a formal award letter along with the category of grant secured;

13.8. Evaluators feedbacks will be sent to all applicants;

13.9. The total grant amount will be released directly to the college by beginning of July every year.

13.10. The audit of the research/project grant shall be conducted in the respective colleges from where the grant is won and where the grant money is transferred.

14. Monitoring and Reporting

14.1. **Mid Progress report**

14.1.1. By end of January every year, researcher(s) will be required to submit a half-yearly progress report using the Half-yearly Progress Reporting template attached as Annexure 3 to the College Research Committee.

14.1.2. DRIL Office will provide a summary report to DRER for information.

14.2. **Final report**

To ensure quality research, through the CRC, individual researchers will be required to submit or show proof of the following to DRER:

14.2.1. A policy brief of not more than 1000 words within 3 months after the completion of the research. As per the template attached;

14.2.2. Complete report as per the template attached Annexure 4 and 5;

14.2.3. DRER will publish the compiled report the completion report and policy brief as part of the Annual AURG report;

15. Additional Information

15.1. The application form (Annexure 1) is available in electronic format at www.rub.edu.bt/research/research-supports to download, fill up, print out and certified by all relevant staff as prescribed in the application form.

15.2. The dully filled up AURG application form shall be scanned and submit to DRER through DRIL.

15.3. Any applications received later than the deadline provided and incomplete will be considered invalid and not process for grant evaluation.

15.4. The respective college will look for possibilities to provide necessary support such as printing, voice recorder and any other equipment required for the research.

15.5. Facilities & Administrative costs may be charged by the Colleges, at the default rate, unless otherwise waiver is approved. Note: Respective colleges might like to have their own version of the guidelines depending on the total amount they have for research activities and also on the number of faculty in each of the three categories.

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