

**Research Grant for Sustainable Development Goals-RGSDGs**

**Guidelines and Procedures**



**ORIC-University of Balochistan, GoB & UNDP**

**2020**

**Preamble**

Research grant for sustainable development goals- RG-SDGs is supported by Planning & Development Department (P&DD), Government of Balochistan and UNDP under Balochistan SDGs Accelerated program as an innovative approach to accelerate the progress on SDGs in Balochistan. The RG-SDGs promotes the view that only incremental innovation and research based studies can provide best possible methods and frameworks to go towards targets set by 2030 agenda of SDGs. RG-SDGs also ensures involvement of young professionals of Balochistan in the form M.Phil./Ph.D. scholars pursuing their higher education degrees in University of Balochistan. Funded proposals are expected to perform research and development that lead to innovation and resulting knowledge economy in the university as well as in the province. We encourage proposals that perform original research as well as leverage results of existing research to develop sustainable solutions for important social, industrial and commercial problems.

RG-SDGs is intended to provide research grant to registered M.Phil. & Ph.D. scholars where personal or departmental resources have been exhausted. The funding may encompass research group/teams for research projects, which may incorporate two or more departments through new collaborative initiative, creating entrepreneurial opportunities and exploring interdisciplinary domains in the pure context of SDGs.

With the development of science and technology (S&T), over the last few decades, it has become imperative to look into equipments and experimental setups to be compatible with latest technologies; therefore, we have to harness new scientific endeavors with these sophisticated experimental setups. This fund will provide an opportunity to strengthen research laboratory, to enhance the capacity of research units within departments /institutes for conducting research around sustainable development goals (SDGs).

**Goals**

* Build and strengthen awareness and capacity among young researchers to contribute in achieving SDG agenda
* Stimulate the development of analytical tools for solving SDG challenges

**Rules/Conditions for Research Grant**

* Funding may be provided for the purchase of equipment, tools etc., after formal approval from Joint Expert Panel (JEP). The equipment must be of a specialized nature, required exclusively for the project and is either not available at, or cannot be spared from, parent department/Institution for the specific project.
* The requested grant shall not exceed PKR 1.6 lac for Ph.D., and PKR 85 thousand for MS/M.Phil. scholars respectively.
* Equipment that is purchased through this fund must be the property of concerned department/laboratory for future use. Such equipment must be useful for new/other projects to be taken up in future.
* Principle investigator (PI) must be a regular MS/M.Phil. or Ph.D. scholar of UoB.
* The synopsis of the scholar must, either be approved by the AS&RB or ready to submit for the forthcoming meeting of AS&RB. In such case, the PI needs to submit an endorsement letter dully signed by prospective supervisor, and DAC.
* All purchasing/payments shall be done through prescribed rules of UoB.
* The fund, if approved, will be provided to the PI to his bank account and the PI shall submit a fund utilization report that shall include original bills, quotations etc., dully verified.

**Items Eligible for Funding**

* Research laboratory equipment can be requested in the proposal; however, an evidence that such equipment does not exist or available at the department/university duly verified by concerned head of the department/institute shall be attached with the project.
* Some internal/external laboratories charge fee for experiments.
* Computers/ laptops may not be purchased with this funding. However, dedicated computing devices for extensive data processing to support research may be requested.
* Software tools, datasets, or sample collection expenditure.

**Evaluation Criteria**

* **Clarity**: Describe in detail the project to be funded. Both the abstract and proposal sections must be written in clear, non-specialized, generalist language showing its alignment with SDGs as JEP consists of members from departments across the campus. It must be original, not quoted from a graduate student handbook or course syllabus. It is best to be specific about the substance of your (hypo) thesis and its relation to existing literature on your topic.
* **Relevance of project to field/discipline**: How was your research problem selected? What are the major questions and terms in your field related to your project and what are you doing in response to them? How is the project goal important in terms of SDGs? How can it contribute to advancing knowledge in the pure context of SDGs?
* **Structure**: There must be a well-developed plan for structuring your research work mindful of SDGs and the costs associated with it.
* **Focused process/outcome**: There must be a clear and focused work process in mind. Costs do not have to be clearly linked to the final product/outcome, but they must be linked to part of a process clearly leading to that final product/outcome.
* **Demonstrated financial need**: You should directly address this criterion in your budget justification by showing all associated costs and where funding is being provided or the sources, it is being sought from.
* **Support letter**: PI/You shall seek a letter from the research supervisor and chairperson/director of your department/institute that shall address; how the proposal align with SDGs plus needs funding indicating that the required equipment/samples/kits etc., are not available to you in the department or from other resources.

**Evaluation Process:**

* ORIC shall do the internal scrutiny of RG-SDGs applications/proposals for the completeness of applications; incomplete application will be rejected without any further process.
* Complete application forms shall be forwarded to the expert (internal/external subject to availability and time constraint) and concerned chairperson for technical evaluation of the project on the prescribed evaluation proforma. The evaluation reports by both evaluators shall be received at ORIC within 15 working days.
* The evaluation reports are then presented in the meeting of Joint Expert Panel (JEP) for final decision.
* Joint Expert Panel (JEP) shall comprise of concerned faculty & research DEAN, Director ORIC, Manager Research Operations & Promotion (ORIC), three faculty members from relevant faculties.
* RG-SDGs Grants will provide for legitimate research expenses for the purchase of equipment, travel for data collection and feasibility study for high value research and are not a source of stipend or tuition funding.  A grant request can be up to PKR 0.085 Million for MS/M.Phil. and 0.16 Million for Ph.D. scholar which must be well justified.
* In the justification section of the BUDGET of the proposal, identify the overall budget, indicate current available resources and justify the need for additional resources as reflected in this grant request.
* Funds must be used for those items listed in the proposal budget.  If research needs change and you want to make an adjustment to your budget you need to coordinate with Director ORIC & Treasurer to request a variance, prior to spending the funds.

**Objectives alignment *(Please fill against each objective the respective outcomes, deliverables and budgeted items)***

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| **Objectives** | **Expected outcomes** | **Deliverable in the context of SDGs** | **Budgeted items** |
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**Mid-way Progress Report:**

Mid way progress must be submitted on the mid of the research grant as mentioned in research proposal to justify the progress and accomplishment of objective after the release of grant on the following tabular template.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Milestone** | **Deliverable** | **Actual Proposed Time of Completion** | **Status**   1. Completed 2. Initiated 3. Pending | **Reason** (in case of delay/pending items) |
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| **Technical Evaluation** | | | |
| **Date of Request:** |  | **Due Date:** |  |

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | Title of Project/Proposal: |  | | Principal Investigator: |  | | Department: |  | |

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| **Evaluator’s Details:** | | | | | | | | | |
| Name: | | |  | | | | | | |
| Designation: | | |  | | | | | | |
| Institution: | | |  | | | | | | |
| Address: | | |  | | | | | | |
| Tel #: |  | | | Cell #: |  | | | Email |  |
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| **To The Evaluator:** To what degree are you familiar with the proposed topic/project?  *(Mark all that are applicable)* | |
| [ ] I am actively engaged in research and/or developmental work in this specific area. | |
| [ ] I have carried out research and/or developmental work in the past in this specific area. | |
| [ ] I have taught courses in this specific area. | |
| [ ] My experience is in the general area but I have not worked in this specific area. | |
| Other Comments: |  |
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**Evaluation Guidelines of Research Proposal**

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| **Background** |
| Evaluate the key strengths and weaknesses keeping in view the below guiding points. |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | a. | Does the literature review describe and covers the specific domain till state of the art and justify its importance? | | b. | Does the literature review provide succinct information about existing solutions to the key bottleneck and rate limiting factors? | | c. | Are challenges and shortcomings in the existing solutions discussed? | | d. | Does PI justify need and motivation for the proposed project in the context of SDGs? | | e. | Does the research background summary and references are relevant to the proposed project ? |   **Impact analysis**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | a. | Does the proposed product/solution address the current and future needs of relevant disciplines in the light of SDGs? | | b. | Does the proposal describe process for technology transfer to potential beneficiaries and utilization by relevant stakeholders? | |

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| **Objectives & Research Approach** |  |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  | |  | Does the proposed approach contain analysis, design, development, implementation and testing plans in the context of SDGs? | |  | Does the proposed approach include high-level information like block-diagrams/ schematics etc. for proposed hardware/software solution? | |  | Is the proposed approach implementable? | |  | Will proposed objectives be achieved through implementing the proposed research and/or development process towards any of the SDGs? | |  | Are deliverables concrete and tangible and quarterly apart in the context of SDGs? | |  | Are milestones and deliverables aligned with SDGs? | | |

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| **Proposed Budget** |  |
| Evaluate the proposed budget of the project in accordance with the following guiding points. | |
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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | a. | Is the request for equipment justified? | | b. | Have the specifications for the demanded equipment been provided? | | c. | Does the equipment claimed according to the technical tasks involved in the project? | | d. | If the project is an extension of another project, has the equipment already purchased and used during previous project (already completed or nearing completion) been catered for a while demanding new equipment? | | |

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| **Resources & Other Requirements** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | a. | Is the PI aware of latest developments in the proposed area? | | b. | Has the PI been working on similar projects in the past? | | c. | Does the PI have published work in the proposed area? | |

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| **Technical Final Review**  **Background, Outcomes & Benefits** | | |
| Evaluate the efforts of PI in referencing the literature/ research background of the proposed area and assessing current state of the art and challenges associated with it, outcomes and benefits. Your specific comments on the sections’ strengths and weaknesses are significant. | | |
| **Key Strengths:** |  | |
| **Key Weaknesses:** |  | |
| **Grade:** (check one) | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Satisfactory | Above Average | Well Above Average | | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
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| **Objectives**  **Research Approach** | | |
| Evaluate the methods and approach described by PI as well as objectives of the proposed project. Your specific comments on the sections’ strengths and weaknesses are significant. | | |
| **Key Strengths:** |  | |
| **Key Weaknesses:** |  | |
| **Grade:** (check one) | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Satisfactory | Above Average | Well Above Average | | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
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| **Resources & Other Requirements** | | |
| Evaluate the above sections, keeping in view the guiding points and rank accordingly. Your specific comments on the sections’ strengths and weaknesses are significant. | | |
| **Key Strengths:** |  | |
| **Key Weaknesses:** |  | |
| **Grade:** (check one) | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Unsatisfactory | Needs Improvement | Satisfactory | Above Average | Well Above Average | | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
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| **Proposed Budget** | | |
| Evaluate the proposed budget in accordance with the guiding points and rank accordingly. Your specific comments on the sections’ strengths and weaknesses are significant. | | |
| **Key Strengths:** | <type here> | |
| **Key Weaknesses:** | <type here> | |
| **Grade:** (check one) | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Significantly Under Estimated | Under Estimated | Good Estimate | Over Estimated | Significantly Over Estimated | | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
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| **Overall Rating of the Proposal:** |
| In summary, I rate the proposal as: |
| |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Rejected | Resubmit with Revision | Accept with Minor Revision | Accept as it is | Well Above Average | | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |

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| **Overall Recommendations:** | | | | |
| [ ] Recommended for JEP meeting in its current form. | | | | |
| [ ] Recommended for revision with the following revisions. | | | | |
| Suggested revisions: | | <type here> | | |
| [ ] Not Recommended because of the following reasons: | | | | |
| [ ] Similar ideas have already been funded many times.  [ ] Objectives are too broad and vague to be achieved realistically.  [ ] No focused development approach is presented w.r.t SDGs.  [ ] Methods and approach are not satisfactory.  [ ] Project structure and design is not devised satisfactorily.  [ ] Proposal needs significant improvement to deliver the proposed value in realistic time and budget and thus, may be resubmitted afresh if desired.  [ ] After maximum number of review(s)/re-evaluation(s), the proposal has not yet been recommended for funding by the evaluators.  [ ] Others: (Please specify) | | | | |
| <type here> | | | | |
| Date: |  | | Signature: |  |