

South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

University Research Grants

Regulations governing the award of University Research Grants

The objective of making available research grants is to encourage the members of the academic staff to do original research in their respective fields of study contributing to the enhancement of knowledge of the subject field. The proposed project should be of benefit to the country. The research should be novel and have a unique perspective on the field of study.

1.0 Composition of the Research Management Committee (RMC)

- 1.1 Each Faculty shall have a Faculty Research Management Committee (FRMC) comprising the Dean of the respective faculty, Head of each Department of Study, Chairperson/Faculty Higher Degrees Committee (where applicable), Faculty representative to the Senate Research and Publication Committee (RPC), five academic staff members appointed by the Faculty Board. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be appointed by the Faculty Board, other than the Dean of the Faculty from the other members of the faculty, and shall hold office for a period of two years reckoned from the date of his/her appointment.
- 1.2 The Library shall have a Library Research Management Committee (LRMC) comprising the Librarian and the Senior Assistant Librarians. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be appointed by the Library Committee, other than the Librarian from the other members of the LRMC, and shall hold office for a period of two years reckoned from the date of his/her appointment.
- 1.3 FRMC and LRMC will be referred to as RMC in the following document.

2.0 Responsibilities of the Research Management Committee (RMC)

- 2.1 The RMC shall sit at least once in two months; corrected minutes of all RMC meetings should be tabled at the Faculty Board / Library Committee.
- 2.2 Processing, evaluation and selection of research grant applications received by the Dean of each faculty/ Librarian, each year, for the award of University Research Grants, shall be the primary responsibility of the RMC.
- 2.3 RMC shall continuously monitor the progress of the work carried out by the grantees of university research grants and table the Progress Reports at the RMC meetings. RMC shall ensure that grantees submit their Progress Reports and the Final Report in time and according to the stipulated format.
- 2.4 RMC shall be expected to carry out any other responsibility to promote research approved by the Faculty Board / Library Committee.

3.0 Conditions of Award of University Research Grants

Eligibility

- 3.1 Only members of the permanent academic staff of the university shall be eligible to apply for university-funded research grants. In the case of the Library staff, the Librarian, Deputy Librarians, Senior Assistant Librarians, Assistant Librarians, and any other members approved by the Governing authority shall be eligible to apply for university-funded research grants.
- 3.2 Each staff member shall be entitled to only **one grant** at any one time as the principal/chief investigator. However, a staff member who has obtained a university-funded research grant and is the principal investigator, may in addition, function as a **collaborator in another** university-funded research project. In exceptional circumstances, if the applicant's research progress is outstanding (RMC can recommend with the quality and quantity of publications), RPC may consider an additional new research grant subject to the availability of funds.
- 3.3 If an applicant in a particular Department of study wishes to conduct a collaborative study with a member from another Department in the university, both Heads of Departments shall recommend the application for the relevant research grant. However, all equipment purchased under the grant shall be taken into the inventory of the Department to which the principal investigator belongs, the name of the Department in which the above items are to be maintained shall be indicated in the original research grant application (Form RIC 02AP).
- 3.4 The contribution of each collaborator should be indicated in the research grant application.

4.0 Duration of Research Grants

- 4.1 Applications for **one-year** research grants shall be awarded for a period of one calendar year from the effective date of award and may be extended on the request of the grantee, under exceptional circumstances for a reasonable period of time at the discretion of the RPC, without additional funding.
- 4.2 Applications for more than one year of research grants shall be considered in the first instance for the first year of the grant. For the next year, the grantee is expected to make a fresh application in the following year under the continuing grant scheme (CG). The progress made at the end of the first year of the grant (based on the Final Report) will be considered in extending a grant for the next year. The award of a research grant for the next year (under the Continuing Grant Scheme) will depend on the availability of funds and the grant applications received for that year. Hence, no assurance will be given for the next year's research grant.
- 4.3 The RPC may consider an extension upon the recommendation of the RMC. However, such extensions will be subjected to the following conditions, the progress of the research must be at a satisfactory level, and the duly progress reports must be submitted in proper time.

The maximum extension period that can be considered for completion of any project is one year from the original completion date. Further extensions beyond the maximum allowable period will not be considered.

5.0 Call for Applications for University Research Grants

- 5.1 Notices calling for applications for University Research Grants shall be issued to the Deans of all Faculties / Librarian by the Vice-Chancellor/Director, Research and Innovation Centre (RIC) of the University **twice a year** by the 01st of November and 01st of May (or on such date/s as decided by the Vice- Chancellor) for grants that are to be funded in the following year and the current year respectively. The Dean /Librarian shall bring this to the notice of all academic staff members of the Faculty/ Library as early as possible.
- 5.2 The closing date for submission of applications to Deans of respective faculties /Librarian shall be 31st December and 30th June (or on such date/s as decided by the Vice-Chancellor).
- 5.3 At the time of calling for applications for grants, the RIC of the University shall ensure that the grant application form (Form RIC 02AP) is made available to all academic staff members either on the University website or as printed copies through the AR/SAR of RIC.
- 5.4 Each applicant for a research grant shall complete the application form (Form RIC 02AP) and submit the signed copy of the application, on or before the closing date, to the Dean of the Faculty through the Head of the Department / Librarian.
- 5.5 The Dean/ Librarian shall forward all applications to the Chairperson, RMC within one week of the closing date of applications to be tabled at the RMC for evaluation.

6.0 Processing of Grant Applications

- 6.1 The Chairperson of RMC shall allocate a number to each set of applications forwarded by the Dean / Librarian. In allocating project numbers, the Research grant shall be marked GR. Continuing Grants shall be marked CG-1 (First Year) and CG-2 (Second Year).
- 6.2 Each set of applications should be presented at the RMC meeting convened within one month of receiving applications from the Dean / Librarian. During this meeting, each applicant is expected to deliver a concise 10-minute presentation outlining their research proposal to the RMC and actively seek feedback from the RMC members.
- 6.3 Research grant applications that are recommended by the RMC for the award of a research grant and those that are accepted subject to corrections shall be recommended to RPC for approval. The amount of funds allocated to the Faculty / Library in a given year will be taken into consideration when finalizing the grant applications. Each RMC shall have its own scheme of prioritization of research proposals. RMC should make every effort to accommodate project proposals of **National importance** keeping in line with RPC regulations.
- 6.4 Applicants who had not been punctual in submitting their Progress/Final Reports during the previous three years shall be given low priority. A grantee who has requested to cancel a grant after it is accepted or has been subjected to any punishment in relation to any research grant/s undertaken by him/her, or any misappropriation of government funds, shall not be eligible for any university-funded research grant for a period of **three years**.
- 6.5 Each Faculty/ Library shall prepare a list of approved applications in the order of priority based on the criteria for selection and on the amount of funds allocated to the Faculty / Library. Each Faculty shall also prepare a reserve list in order of priority from the applications that have been recommended by the reviewers, for further consideration by the RPC if additional funds are available.

- 6.6 The applications approved by the RMC, listed in order of priority with a summary of the amount allocated to each grant shall be forwarded to the RPC through the Dean of the respective Faculty / Library on or before the closing date (31st January / 31st July).
- 6.7 A special meeting of the RPC shall be held within two weeks after the receipt of processed applications from the RMC by the Vice-Chancellor. Based on the recommendation of the RMC, RPC shall decide on the final list of applications for each Faculty/ Library for the award of research grants.
- 6.8 All grantees shall be informed of the result of their applications within two weeks from the date of approval by the RPC and the effective date of the grant shall be the date determined by the RPC or by the Vice-Chancellor.

7.0 Acceptance, Signing of Agreement & Disbursement of Funds

- 7.1 A person who has been awarded a research grant shall inform the Vice-Chancellor / Director, RIC through the Head of the Department concerned, Chairperson, RMC and the Dean of the Faculty / Librarian of his/her acceptance of the grant within one week from the date of receipt of the letter of award or the date as specified in the award letter.
- 7.2 Each Grantee shall sign an agreement (RIC 02AG) with the University after which funds shall be released in installments to the Grantee to meet the expenses as set out in the grant application.
- 7.3 Regulations governing the award of University Research Grant as follows:
- (i) The total cost of the research project should not exceed Rs. 500,000.00 per year for the Lecturer (Probationary) / Lecturer / Assistant Librarian.
- (ii) The total cost of the research project should not exceed Rs. 1,000,000.00 per year for Senior Lecturer Gr-II / Senior Asst. Librarian Gr-II and above.

The maximum allocation of research grants can be considered based on the availability of funds and the nature of the research.

- 7.4 Grant shall be paid in installments according to the request of cash advances by the grantee. The grant shall be allocated on the following basis. (Percentage of the total grant)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 01. Literature Survey
(This service could be obtained through the Librarian & and NSF free of charge) | - Maximum 10% |
| 02. Stationary, Consumables and Postage
(Including final printing and binding) | - Maximum 10% |
| 03. Equipment and Chemicals | - valid justification needed |
| 04. Payment for assistance
(Data collection/data processing) payment based on men's hour | - only based on valid justification |
| 05. Travelling & subsistence for grantee
(Subsistence can be granted based on the UGC circulars up to 15 days for the whole project per year) | - Maximum 25% with valid justification |
| 06. Publication/conference | - Maximum 15% |

- 7.5 No further advances from the grant shall be released unless the Progress Reports and financial reports of the grant have been submitted to the RPC through RMC. The Chairperson, RMC, and the Dean of the respective Faculty / Librarian shall certify that such reports have been submitted in order to release the requested funds.
- 7.6 If the Grantee fails to submit the relevant Progress and financial reports within the date/s stipulated by the RPC, the grant for the respective year shall be withheld/withdrawn at the discretion of the RPC and the Grantee shall be requested to refund all or part of the funds released together with any penalty charges that may be imposed.
- 7.7 No funds shall be allocated to pay **salaries** for Research Assistants or to any other personnel. However, the services of data processing, field/laboratory assistants, and labourers may be obtained on a casual/daily basis if necessary.
- 7.8 No payment of overtime, subsistence, or any other remuneration shall be paid from research funds to employees of the University for such work of secretarial assistance.
- 7.9 If university resources (including transport) are to be used by the Grantee for his/her research work, all such expenses borne in this connection shall be debited against the relevant grant, or the Grantee shall be requested to reimburse them.
- 7.10 Any vehicle requests for research projects or research purposes should follow vehicle allocation and usage policy and guidelines of the government. Hence all are advised strictly to follow the guidelines. For such purposes, vehicles of the university should be used requesting through proper channels. In any circumstances, if university vehicles are not available, the Deputy Registrar / General Administration should procure the hiring of vehicles according to financial guidelines. The above should apply to all research grants whether the travel is internal or external.
- 7.11 All equipment purchased from a research grant shall be entered in the **permanent inventory book** of the Department to which the grantee belongs. All grantees shall maintain a **subsidiary inventory/s** for each research project giving details of all items (e.g. consumables, equipment, etc.) purchased from the grant and also maintain a record of all **cash transactions**.
- 7.12 Once the project is completed, all items (including unused consumables) purchased under the grant should be **handed over** to the respective Department within **two months** after the completion of the project. A statement to this effect shall be made in the final report.
- 7.13 A Grantee shall be permitted to purchase books/journals provided such materials have been approved and recommended during the processing of the application. After the completion of the project, such materials shall be handed over to the Library / Department.
- 7.14 No funds from the grants shall be released for any expenses relating to **foreign travel**.
- 7.15 Payment vouchers submitted to draw funds from a research grant shall be forwarded through the Head of the Department, Dean of the Faculty concerned/ Librarian, and Director, RIC to the Bursar.
- 7.16 Any advances obtained under the research grant shall be settled within **14 (fourteen) days**. No further funds shall be advanced until the previous advances are settled. The Assistant Bursar, Research shall send quarterly reports indicating the amount released to each

Grantee and the balance remaining to the Director, RIC who shall place such reports before the RPC as and when required.

- 7.17 Any unutilized or surplus funds of any research project shall be reallocated for the granting of new research awards according to the order of priority of the reserve list or for projects requiring additional funds at the discretion of the RPC.
- 7.18 Any requested revision of budgetary allocations shall be subjected to the approval of the RPC on the recommendation of the respective RMC.
- 7.19 If the Grantee obtains any outside funds for the Research Project for which university funds had been allocated, he/she shall inform the RPC through RMC immediately.

8.0 Submission of Progress Reports and Final Reports

- 8.1 Each Grantee shall submit two Progress Reports, the first (RIC 02PR1) by 30th June of that year and the second (RIC 02PR2) by 31st of December. Progress Report should be submitted through the Head of the Department to the Chairperson, RMC (a copy of the covering letter should be submitted directly to the Director, RIC for information). The RMC shall evaluate these reports and forward the original report with their observation to the RPC through the Dean of the Faculty / Librarian for consideration and approval. All Progress reports should be prepared as per common guidelines given in the Form (RIC 02PR). A soft copy of the progress report should be emailed to the SAR/ASA parallel to the hard copy submission.
- 8.2 If the Progress Reports are not submitted by the stipulated dates (i.e.30th June and 31st December) further advances from the respective Research Grants shall be withheld, until such reports are submitted.
- 8.3 Once the research project is completed, each Grantee shall submit a Final Report (RIC 02FR) within three months after the last Progress Report. The Final Report should be submitted in **triplicate** to the Chairperson, RMC through the Head of Department. (a copy of the covering letter should be submitted directly to the Director, RIC for information). The RMC shall make a preliminary screening and if found satisfactory shall forward two copies through the Dean/ Librarian to the RPC and also recommend the names of three outside experts of whom the RPC shall select two names to review the Final Report. **If the research project has produced an indexed publication (indexed in Scopus Q1-Q4 journals or SCIE, ESCI, SSCI, or AHCI of Clarivate Analytics) and the Publications in Sri Lankan State Universities refereed Journals excluding the own university can be exempted from external expert review.**
- 8.4 The Final Report shall be a comprehensive report giving the details as requested in Form (RIC 02FR) and should give details of work carried out, the research findings, a summary of financial expenses, a certified copy of the list of the items handed over to the Head of the Department, a financial statement from the AB, Research confirming that all university funds given to the Grantee under the project have been fully and duly settled. Copies of all publications and presentations arising out of the grant should also be attached or submitted subsequently to the RPC.
- 8.5 If a delay in submitting the Progress report/Final report is anticipated due to unavoidable circumstances, prior written permission should be obtained from the RPC, requesting a period of extension for submission of the Progress report / Final report. Such requests from grantees should be forwarded to the Director, RIC through the Head of the Department,

Chairperson of the RMC, and the Dean of the Faculty/ Librarian. The AR / SAR, RIC shall table such requests from grantees at RPC meetings for approval.

- 8.6 If the Final report is not submitted within the stipulated time period (03 months after the last Progress Report), steps shall be taken to recover the funds utilized by the Grantee from his/her salary or from any other funds lying to the credit of the Grantee in the University system. Any balance remaining in the grant shall be credited to the University Research Fund on the recommendation of the RPC.

9.0 Evaluation of Progress Reports and Final Reports

- 9.1 Progress Reports of each grant shall be evaluated by the RMC or a reviewer appointed by the RMC.
- 9.2 The RPC shall appoint two external reviewers (from outside the university) to review the Final Report of each grant, from among a panel of three names recommended by the RMC. A copy of the original application (RIC 02AP) shall also be given to the Reviewers along with the Final Report.
- 9.3 The reviewers' reports shall be placed before the RPC for further consideration and approval. The RPC shall inform its decision on the Final Report to the Grantee and to the Chairman, RMC through the Dean of the Faculty/ Librarian concerned.

10.0 Other Conditions

- 10.1 All correspondence with the Vice Chancellor / Director, RIC regarding research projects shall be channeled through the Head of the Department, the Chairperson, RMC, and the Dean of the Faculty / Librarian concerned. However, all correspondence in regard to purchases, or withdrawal of cash advances, shall be channeled through the Head of the Department and the Dean of the Faculty/ Librarian concerned. A copy of the covering letter should be sent to the Director, RIC for information.
- 10.2 The Grantee shall abide by the Finance and Administrative Regulations that are applicable to the university system.
- 10.3 The Grantee shall be responsible for any legal, audit and other implications that may arise due to non-compliance with these approved university regulations and the university shall not be liable to pay any compensation, reimbursement of any fines imposed or for any financial and other losses.
- 10.4 If any collaborator wishes to relieve him/herself from all responsibilities under the grant or where the Principal/Chief Grantee finds it difficult to work with a collaborator and wish to replace or remove him/her from all responsibilities under the grant, the request should be made through the Head of the Department to the Dean of the Faculty / Librarian giving justifiable reasons. The Dean / Librarian shall request the respective RMC to investigate and submit a report.

The Dean / Librarian shall forward the report with his/her recommendation to the RPC for further action. The decision of the RPC shall be final unless an appeal is made to the Vice-Chancellor within a period of two weeks from the date of receipt of the notice. The RPC shall decide as to what recognition, if any, should be given to the collaborator for his/her contribution towards the grant.

- 10.5 A Grantee who intends to be on leave from his/her place of work, he/she shall make prior arrangements to see that the work under the grant is either being continued by a co-researcher or temporarily hand-over the grant to another academic staff member before going on leave. It shall be the responsibility of the Grantee to reimburse any loss caused to the University due to the non-availability of the Grantee or due to any unsatisfactory arrangements made. The Grantee should take the responsibility of submitting half yearly Progress Reports/Final report in time under those circumstances.
- 10.6 Where in the opinion of the Vice-Chancellor or the RPC it was observed that a Grantee has violated any of the terms and conditions governing the award of University Research Grants or having utilized any portion of the grant had to wind-up the project without making any significant contribution towards the objectives of the project due to his/her leave of absence, negligence, involved in financial mismanagement, waste of allocated research funds, or unsatisfactory execution of the award or found to be involved in any other form of misappropriation of research funds or items purchased under the grant, or non-submission of Progress and or Final Reports on due dates etc. and needs further investigation and or warrants disciplinary action, the Vice-Chancellor shall appoint a Panel of three members of the RPC headed by a Dean of a Faculty (other than that from the Grantee's Faculty) / Librarian to investigate and report the findings which shall be placed before the forthcoming meetings of the RPC through Director, RIC and the Senate for further consideration. The Vice-Chancellor shall submit these observations and recommendations to the University Council, where applicable, for the recovery of the full or any part of the funds allocated to the Grantee together with any penalty interest or other charges, and also for appropriate disciplinary action.
- 10.7 If the Grantee leaves the university without settling the advances taken by him/her from the research grant or if the Grantee has not properly handed over all the items purchased under the Grant to the Head of the Department or if any items purchased under the grant are found to be lost, missing or damaged owing to the negligence of the Grantee, the cost of such losses and damages sustained by the university shall be recovered from his/her University Provident Fund as per Section 94 of the University Act No.16 of 1978 or subsequent amendment/s made thereto.
- 10.8 Any amendments to the above regulations shall be effective only after approval given by the Senate/Council as appropriate,
- 10.9 The above regulations shall be effective from the Year 2024 onwards for the purpose of processing, and approving applications and for the execution of all university-funded research grants.

-End-