

University Research Grants

- **Composition and responsibilities of the FRC**
- **Regulations governing the award of University Research Grants**

1.0 Composition of the Faculty Research Committee (FRC)

- 1.1 Each Faculty shall have a Faculty Research Committee (FRC) 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 Committee (SRC), five academic staff members, and two outside members (who are knowledgeable in the fields of study relevant to each faculty) appointed by the Faculty Board. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be appointed by the Faculty Board, other than the Dean, Heads of Departments and the Chairman of the Higher Degrees Committee, the other members of the FRC shall hold office for a period of three years reckoned from the date of his/her appointment.
- 1.2 The Library shall have a Library Research Committee (LRC) comprising the Librarian and the Senior Assistant Librarians (Grade I).
- 2.0 Responsibilities of the Faculty Research Committee
- 2.1 The FRC shall sit at least once in three months, corrected Minutes of all FRC meetings should be tabled at the Faculty Board.
- 2.2 Processing, evaluation and selection of research grant applications received by the Dean of each faculty, each year, for the award of University Research Grants, shall be the primary responsibility of the FRC.
- 2.3 FRC shall continuously monitor the progress of the work carried-out by the grantees of university research grants and table the Progress Reports at the FRC meetings. FRC shall ensure that grantees submit their Progress Reports and the Final Report in time and according to the stipulated format.
- 2.4 FRC is expected to play an active role in the Peradeniya University Research Sessions (PURSE) held annually. Processing, evaluation and selection of research papers (Extended abstracts/Abstracts) submitted to the faculty for presentation at PURSE shall be the responsibility of the FRC. The Chairman of the FRC shall work closely with PURSE committees and the faculty sub-editors of PURSE to ensure smooth and efficient conduct of PURSE sessions.
- 2.5 FRC shall be expected to carryout any other responsibility to promote research approved by the Faculty Board.

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 and Assistant Librarians 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.
- 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 RG/AP).
- 3.4 The contribution of each collaborator should be indicated in the research grant application.
- 3.5 It is mandatory for those who have obtained university funded research grants to present their findings at the PURSE that follows immediately after completion of the project., Research papers submitted to PURSE that are not accepted for presentation following the reviewing process, should be brought to the notice of the SRC with reasons for rejection, as this fact will be considered in awarding grants for such persons in the future.

4.0 Duration of Research Grants

Applications for 1-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 SRC, without additional funding.

Applications for 2-year research grants shall be considered in the first instance for the first year of the grant. For the second 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 first year of the grant (based on the Final Report) will be considered in extending a grant for the second year. Award of a research grant for the second 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 2nd year of the research grant.

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 by the Vice-Chancellor/SAR- Council and Academic Branch of the University by the 15th of December (or on such date/s as decided by the Vice-Chancellor) for grants that are to be funded in the following year. The Dean shall bring this to the notice of all academic staff members of the Faculty as early as possible.
- 5.2 The closing date for submission of applications to Deans of respective faculties shall be 15th of February (or on such date/s as decide by the Vice-Chancellor).
- 5.3 At the time of calling for applications for grants, the SAR/Council & Academic Branch of the University shall ensure that the grant application form (RG/AP Form) is made available to all academic staff members either on the University website or as printed copies through the SAR/Council & Academic Branch.
- 5.4 Each applicant for a research grant shall complete the application form (RG/AP Form) and submit three signed copies of the application, on or before the closing date, to the Dean of the Faculty through the Head of the Department.
- 5.5 The Dean shall forward all applications to the Chairperson/FRC within one week of the closing date of applications to be tabled at the FRC for evaluation.

6.0 Processing of Grant Applications

- 6.1 The Chairperson/FRC shall allocate a number to each set of applications forwarded by the Dean. In allocating project numbers, Continuing Grants shall be marked CG-I (First Year) and CG-2 (Second Year).
- 6.2 The set of applications should be tabled at a FRC meeting held within one week of receipt of applications from the Dean. At this meeting the Evaluation form for reviewers of grant applications, prepared by the respective FRC should be finalized and placed before the committee. The FRC shall also appoint two reviewers for each application, preferably from outside the University. In exceptional cases reviewers from senior staff members from other faculties or within the faculty, who have not applied for university funded research grants for the relevant year may be appointed.
- 6.3 Chairperson/FRC should make arrangements to send each grant application together with the Evaluation form to the two selected reviewers, giving a reasonable time period for reviewing. If any reviewer fails to submit the report within the stipulated period, the SRC shall take appropriate action to evaluate such applications, internally, without further delay.
- 6.4 Research grant applications that are recommended by the reviewers for the award of a research grant and those that are accepted subject to corrections shall be placed before a FRC meeting for approval. The amount of funds allocated to the Faculty in a given Year will be taken into consideration when finalizing the grant applications. Each FRC shall have their own scheme of prioritization of research proposals. FRC

should take every effort to accommodate project proposals of National importance keeping in line with SRC regulations.

- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 Each Faculty 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. 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 SRC if additional funds are available.
- 6.7 Three copies of the FRC approved applications, listed in order of priority with a summary of the amount allocated to each grant shall be forwarded to the SRC through the Dean of the respective Faculty on or before the closing date set by the Vice-Chancellor.
- 6.8 A special meeting of the SRC shall be held within two weeks after the receipt of processed applications from the FRC by the Vice-Chancellor. Based on the recommendation of the FRC, SRC shall decide on the final list of applications for each Faculty for the award of research grants.
- 6.9 One copy of each of the SRC approved applications shall be sent to the applicant through the respective Dean of the Faculty and Chairperson/FRC. One copy shall be kept with the Council and Academic Branch for follow-up action and the other copy should be kept with the Chairperson/FRC.
- 6.10 All grantees shall be informed of the result of their applications within two weeks from the date of approval by the SRC and the effective date of the grant shall be the date determined by the SRC 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 through the Head of the Department concerned, Chairperson/FRC and the Dean of the Faculty 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 (in the format given in RG/Ag) with the university after which funds shall be released in instalments to the Grantee to meet the expenses as set-out in the grant application.
- 7.3 No further advances from the grant shall be released unless the Progress Reports of the grant have been submitted to the FRC. The Chairperson/FRC and the Dean of the respective Faculty shall certify that such reports have been submitted in order to release the requested funds.

- 7.4 If the Grantee fails to submit the relevant Progress and financial reports within the date/s stipulated by the SRC, the grant for the respective year shall be withheld/withdrawn at the discretion of the SRC and the Grantee shall be requested to refund all or part of the funds released together with any penalty charges that may be imposed.
- 7.5 No funds shall be allocated to pay salaries for Research Assistants or to any other personnel. However, the services of field/laboratory assistants and labourers may be obtained on a casual/daily basis if necessary.
- 7.6 No payment of overtime, subsistence or any other remuneration shall be paid from research funds to employees of the University for such work of for secretarial assistance.
- 7.7 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.
- 7.8 All equipment purchased from a research grant shall be entered in the permanent inventory book of the Department too 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.
- 7.9 Once the project is completed, all items (including unused consumables) purchased under the grant should be handed-over to the respective Department within three months after the completion of the project. A statement to this effect shall be made in the final report.
- 7.10 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 Assistant Librarian in-charge of the respective Faculty Library.
- 7.11 No funds from the grants shall be released for any expenses relating to foreign travel.
- 7.12 Payment vouchers submitted to draw funds from a research grant shall be forwarded through the Head of the Department and the Dean of the Faculty concerned to the Assistant Bursar in charge of Research.
- 7.13 Any advances obtained under the research grant shall be settled within 21 (twenty one) 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 SAR/Council and Academic, who shall place such reports before the SRC as and when required.
- 7.14 Any unutilized or surplus funds of any research project shall be re-allocated 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 SRC.

- 7.15 Any requested revision of budgetary allocations shall be subjected to approval of the SRC on the recommendation of the respective FRC.
- 7.16 If the Grantee obtains any outside funds for the Research Project from which university funds had been allocated, he/she shall inform this to the FRC and SRC immediately.

8.0 Submission of Profess Reports and Final Reports

- 8.1 Each Grantee shall submit two Progress Reports, the first (RG/PR1) by 30th June of that year and the second (RG/PR2) by 31st of December. Progress Reports in duplicate should be submitted through the Head of the Department to the Chairperson/FRC (a copy of the covering letter should be submitted directly to SAR/Academic & Council for information). The FRC shall evaluate these reports and forward one report with their observation to the SRC through the Dean of the Faculty for consideration and approval. All Progress reports should be prepared as per common guidelines given in the Form RG/PR.
- 8.2 If the Progress Reports are not submitted by the stipulated dates (i.e. 30th June and 31st of 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 (Form RG/FR) within three months after the last Progress Report. The Final Report should be submitted in triplicate to the SRC through the Head of Department, Assistant Bursar of the Faculty and the Chairperson/FRC (a copy of the covering letter should be submitted directly to SAR/Academic & Council for information). The FRC shall make a preliminary screening and if found satisfactory shall forward two copies through the Dean to the SRC and also recommend the names of three outside experts of whom the SRC shall select two names to review the Final Report.
- 8.4 The Final Report shall be a comprehensive report giving the details as requested in Form RG/FR 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 has 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 SRC.
- 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 SRC, requesting a period of extension for submission of Progress report/Final report. Such requests from grantees should be forwarded to the SAR/Council & Academic Branch through the Head of the Department, Chairman of the FRC and the Dean of the Faculty. The SAR/Council & Academic Branch shall table such requests from grantees at SRC 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 researcher 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 Main Research Fund on the recommendation of the SRC.

9.0 Evaluation of Progress Reports and Final Reports

- 9.1 Half Yearly Progress Report of each grant shall be evaluated by the FRC or a reviewer appointed by the FRC.
- 9.2 The SRC 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 FRC. A copy of the original application (Form RG/AP) shall also be given to the Reviewers along with the Final Report.
- 9.3 The reviewers' reports shall be placed before the SRC for further consideration and approval. The SRC shall inform its decision on the Final Report to the Grantee and to the Chairman/FRC through the Dean of the Faculty concerned.

10.0 Other Conditions

- 10.1 All correspondence with the SRC/VC regarding research projects shall be channelled through the Head of the Department, the Chairman/FRC and the Dean of the Faculty concerned. However, all correspondence in regard to purchases, or withdrawal of cash advances, shall be channelled through the Head of the Department and the Dean of the Faculty concerned.
- 10.2 It is mandatory for all Grantees to present the findings arising out of their research projects at the Peradeniya University Research Sessions (PURSE) either in the same year of award or the following year (provided prior permission has been obtained from the SRC).
- 10.3 The Grantee shall abide by the Finance and Administrative Regulations that are applicable to the university system and also together guidelines issued by the Vice-Chancellor from time to time on utilizing the funds allocated for research purposes.
- 10.4 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.
- 10.5 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 giving justifiable reasons. The Dean shall request the respective FRC to investigate and submit a report.

The Dean shall forward the report with his/her recommendation to the SRC for further action. The decision of the SRC 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 SRC shall decide as to what recognition, if any, should be given to the collaborator for his/her contribution towards the grant.

- 10.6 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 for 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.
- 10.7 Where in the opinion of the Vice-Chancellor or the SRC 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, wast 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 et. And needs further investigation and or warrants disciplinary action, the Vice-Chancellor shall appoint a Panel of three members of the SRC headed by a Dean of a Faculty (other than that from the Grantee's Faculty) to investigate and report the findings which shall be placed before the forth-coming meetings of the SRC and the Senate for further consideration. The Vice-Chancellor shall submit these observation and recommendation 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.
- 10.8 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.
- 10.9 Any amendments to the above regulations shall be effective only after approval by the Senate/Council as appropriate,
- 10.10 The above regulations shall be effective from the Year 2011 onwards for the purpose of processing, approving applications and for the execution of all university funded research grants.