Office of the Provost

Policies and Guidelines

Research Support Grant

(RSG)

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Research Support Grant (RSG)

1. Introduction

AUC provides grant support for innovative research and creative activities. Grants are competitively granted to support individual or group research projects and are administered by the Office of the Associate Provost for Research, Innovation and Creativity (AP-RIC Office).

The maximum allowed fund cannot exceed $10,000 (or the equivalent in Egyptian Pounds) per faculty member per year. Proposals involving more than one faculty member must be submitted by the faculty member who will act as the lead faculty and/or Principal Investigator (PI). If two full-time faculty members submit a joint application, the maximum annual support is $10,000 (or the equivalent in Egyptian Pounds) per faculty member, or $20,000 (or the equivalent in Egyptian Pounds) total for the application. Three or more faculty may apply for joint annual funding of maximum $25,000 (or the equivalent in Egyptian Pound).

 For projects of **interdisciplinary** nature, the respective maximum funding limit will be increased by an additional $5000.

Projects that involve and justify **institutional collaboration** the respective maximum funding limit will be increased by an additional $5000. Grants may be lower than requested based on funding availability, expenditure eligibility and/or timeline. If a group application includes scholars from outside AUC, then AUC funds can only be used to support AUC faculty members' research.

The Principal Investigator (PI) may request additional funding for up to three undergraduate students to support the approved activities of the Research Support Grant. An extra US$500 per student per year will be added to the maximum allowed fund.

Faculty members are encouraged to supplement AUC funding with additional funding from other sources. However, a single project scope cannot be funded by two sources (internal or external), as the segregation of scopes covered by each source will be needed. Special emphasis could be given to the development of new research ideas (in which case, the grant may be viewed as support for a pilot study to allow submission to external funding sources) and to activities that may positively affect the development and growth of the applicant(s), department, faculty and/or university. AUC funding may also be granted to help faculty members supplement funding (i.e., gap funding) for an on-going project, as well as for projects involving advancement of the maturity/readiness of a new technology.

2. Eligibility Criteria

1. AUC Research Grant funding is restricted to full time faculty members.

2. The applicant must have all final reports for any previously awarded internal grants on record as submitted and **approved.**

3. The main applicant shall not apply for more than one FSG per cycle.

4. The main applicant shall not have an active FSG on the time of application.

5. The main applicant must be employed by AUC, in his/her current position, at the time of the funded event.

6. Faculty members on "Paid Medical Leave" are *ineligible* for this type of grant.

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7. Faculty members on "Leave without Pay" shall not be funded for this grant type during their leave period. However, they may apply for funding prior to resuming their work at AUC. No funds will be dispersed until the faculty member resumes work at AUC.

8. Faculty members who leave AUC, or accept a position elsewhere prior to the conference date, will forfeit the grant Agreement or change the PI of the grant.

9. Deans and Associate Provosts are ***ineligible*** for any type of Faculty Support Grants but shall request research funding from the Office of the Provost directly.

3. General Guidelines

1. The evidence of a significant Intellectual output from previously received RSG is an important evaluative criterion.

2. Faculty member may be a PI of only one Research Support Grant at any point of time.

3. Faculty members may be the PI for only one proposal during a funding cycle.

4. Applicant(s) may apply for a longer-term funding (up to 3 years), but fund transfer is subject to approval of an annual progress report, which demonstrates meeting the goals of the elapsed year.

5. Funds must be used as stated in the proposal. PI can submit a request for reallocation of funds to the AP-RIC for approval.

6. Projects that are proprietary in nature are subject to AUC's Intellectual Property Policy.

7. Teaching and Learning Enhancement projects are ineligible for funding as Research Grants.

8. All grant applications for Associate Deans and Chairs will be reviewed by the school Dean and the University Research Board (URB).

9. Retroactive applications will NOT be considered. The definition of retroactive funding is "any expenditure prior to the start date of the grant stated in the counter-signed agreement by the grantee and the AP-RIC. This means that an applicant is not allowed to perform any activity before being informed that the grant has been approved by the AP-RIC Office, signing the Agreement for acceptance, and having the Agreement counter-signed by the AP-RIC."

4. Evaluation Criteria (as communicated to the reviewers)

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria.

1. Clarity of the Academic Scholarlily objectives

2. Advancement of the research questions and alignment with international trends in the relevant field.

3. Quantified targeted Intellectual output. (Expected to be reported in the final report)

4. Clear, relevant and founded work methodology.

5. Organized work plan with clear dependencies among different tasks and resources allocation.

6. Clear Justifications for budget line items and solid budget assumptions.

7. For interdisciplinary projects, the role of every discipline and the value added to the project through the proposed interdisciplinarity.

8. For projects that need local or international institutional collaboration, the added value of having the identified collaborator and the specific anticipated contribution of the collaborators to the activities of the proposal.

5. Elements of New Proposals and Grant Renewals

A. New Proposals

A new proposal must include the following elements:

1. Project title
2. Research questions/ Academic work objectives
3. Expected Intellectual output and its Impact.
4. Project/ Research Methods
5. Work Plan: The duration and plan of actions over quarters and year(s) showing tasks and resource allocations with dependencies.
6. Justifications of Budget line items and Budget assumptions.
7. Budget Sheet: an excel sheet is provided online to itemize expenditures at the following link

    http://www.aucegypt.edu/research/faculty-support-grants

8. Time commitment and role of the PI(s) and, if applicable, CO-PI(s).
9. References
10. Compliance: Applicants are reminded that all projects involving human subjects require approval by AUC's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before funds are granted and the research can begin. Please view the AUC Institutional Review Board (IRB) page:

www.aucegypt.edu/research/research-administration/institutional-reviewboard

11. The applicant will be required to provide a copy of the approval notification or protocol number for approved projects and must bear the responsibility of following all necessary health and safety procedures.
12. Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the PI(s) and, if applicable, of the CO-PI(s). The CV should include: a list of pending and/or current external and internal funding including the title of the projects, start and end dates, and the overlap with the present proposal if any; a list of previously awarded AUC grants; a list of publications identifying those that resulted from AUC grants received during the last three years; and evidence of seeking or receiving external funds during the last three years. (not more than 3 pages in pdf format)

B. Grant Renewals (for Multi-Year Projects)

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A request for the renewal of a current Research Support Grant that was originally proposed as a multi-year project will normally be granted after submitting a detailed Progress Report to the online system on the project for which the grant was granted. The technical and financial report have to be aligned with the deliverables promised in the submitted workplan and the budget. The Report needs to be reviewed and approved by the Departmental Research Committee (DRC), the Dean, and AP-RIC. Further funding from AUC is contingent upon receiving the approval of these reports and funding availability. Renewals will not be permitted for grants that were not originally proposed as multi-year projects.

6. No-Cost Extensions

AP-RIC Office may approve on a case-by-case basis No-Cost Extensions on current research grants. A request for No-Cost Extension must be submitted online by the PI at least two months prior to the end of the grant period, and must include a budget showing the remaining amount, and a justification including: the progress of the project and the reason behind requesting a no-cost extension. Requests for No-Cost Extensions can only be submitted online for one-year projects or at the end of the final year in multi-year projects. For multi-year projects, a Progress Report needs to be submitted with the extension request. Researchers who are granted a No-cost extension for longer than 2 months on their current grant cannot receive a new grant during the same year. If the Dean's recommendation does not match that of the DRC, the application is routed to the URB for a final recommendation within the URB deadline.

7. Other Funding Sources

Principal Investigators (PI)s may apply to more than one funding source for the same research project and budget; however, the other requests for support must be disclosed at the time of applying for this funding. If the PI is granted an AUC's Research Support Grant prior to the release of the other funding source(s) results, AUC funds will not be dispersed until the results from the other funding source(s) are made available. If the PI is successful in receiving support from an external funding source, then the AUC Research Support Grant will be terminated, and the allocated funds will be returned to the AP-RIC Office.

8. Budget

1. For <u>personnel</u>, the budget justification must include a description of the duties of the personnel requested, the required qualifications and an explanation as to why each position is necessary to the success of the project. Workload should be shown to justify the amount of time the person will be employed on the project. All the requested personnel fund has to be provided using the following formula: [amount in EGP per hour **X** no. of hours per week **X** no. of weeks].

2. The levels of Research Assistants <u>hourly compensation</u> are as follows:

   - Research Trainee (Undergraduate student): Up to <u>LE 30/hour</u>

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- Research Assistant (B.A. or B.S.): Up to <u>LE 40-50/hour</u>

- Senior Research Assistant (M.A. or M.S.): Up to <u>LE 50-60/hour</u>

- Research Fellow (Ph.D. – up to 10 years of experience): <u>LE 60-90/hour</u>

- Senior Research Fellow (Ph.D. – Over 10 years of experience): <u>LE 90-120/hour</u>

  - <u>The maximum allowed hourly compensation is 30 hours/week.</u>

  - An incentive of 10% can be offered if the RA is registered for a postgraduate, masters or doctorate, degree where the PI is an official advisor to his/her thesis.

3. <u>Travel and stay budget line may include</u>: air ticket, per diem, visa fees and ground transportation.

4. For travel requiring <u>air ticket,</u> the budget justification must state the exact travel and arrival dates and the destination, as per the research activity dates and location, and the air ticket cost in EGP, as provided and/or approved by the AUC Travel Office. In case of issuing the air ticket elsewhere, the Travel Office's approval and price quotation shall be secured prior to issuing the ticket for reimbursement.

5. Air Tickets shall be booked by the AUC Travel Office and only economy class is allowed. Exceptionally, the Travel Office may approve purchase of a ticket for business travel other than through the Travel Office, if it is satisfied that the traveler can procure the ticket at a price cheaper than that available to the Travel Office after all discounts. Because the overall level of discounts obtained by the Travel Office is heavily dependent upon the annual volume of its business, minor improvements in ticket price will not be considered in determining whether it can be procured elsewhere.

6. AP-RIC Office abides by the AUC monthly exchange rate.

7. The grantee shall finalize the air ticket purchase and all related travel expenses soon after the Agreement is finalized, because AP-RIC Office will not undertake any possible changes in the exchange rate or the ticket price.

8. For travel requiring <u>per diem</u>, the budget justification must state the exact dates requested for per diem and the breakdown of the requested amount, following the price quotation.

9. For travel to the Americas or the Far East, per diem is allowed for two days transit beyond the actual conference period. For other international travel, per diem is allowed for one day transit beyond the actual conference period.

10. **Per Diem** towards expenses for travel abroad:

- Duration of 1-10 days: Up to US $ 225 per day

- Duration of 11-15 days: Up to US $ 175 per day

- Duration of 16-30 days: Up to US $ 120 per day

11. For **domestic travel within Egypt**, the following rates may be used as a guide for per diem rates:

- Travel not requiring overnight: Up to LE185.

- Travel requiring overnight but hotel accommodation is not needed: Up to LE310.

- Travel requiring overnight and hotel accommodation is needed: Up to LE740 (receipts required).

12. Per Diem may not be requested for summer travel coinciding with home leave if the location of the proposed activity is at the home leave destination (city) on record with the school Dean's Office.

13. <u>Ground transportation</u> to and from airports is not covered and can only be requested if the travel location doesn't have a near airport.

14. For <u>supplies and equipment,</u> unless explicit authorization is given in the Grant Agreement, this type of grant cannot be used to purchase major or minor equipment (including computers and accessories), books, and/or publication costs.

15. The budget sheet shall include the breakdown and justification for each requested item in each year, under each column. Whenever appropriate, numbers of units and unit costs should be explained. All the items requested for purchase from Egypt are to be quoted in Egyptian Pounds, while those from abroad are to be requested in USD.

16. All expenditures must follow AUC stated policies and procedures regarding personnel hire, purchases, and travel arrangements.

17. All items purchased using AUC funds remain the property of AUC.

18. The grant fund will be annually transferred to a special WBS number created under the department's cost center, upon submitting the progress report and having it approved.

**If the grant activity starts after the first of July, the grant will be funded from the applicant's maximum allowed fund of the corresponding fiscal year.

➢ *All payments shall be processed through the responsible offices at AUC including, but not limited to: Travel Office, Supply Chain, Controller's Office, print shop, etc., and shall abide by AUC policies and procedures.*

9. **Eligible Expenses**

   1. <u>Personnel</u>:

      - To hire Research Assistant, casual labor, or field worker to participate in the research effort at AUC and enrich it by providing expertise and/or time that complement and assist our fulltime faculty in their research endeavors.

   2. <u>Travel</u>: (<u>shall not exceed 40% of the maximum allowed fund</u>):

      - For projects focusing on attending archival repositories/libraries - (restricted to Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts) – <u>applicant shall provide an explanation</u> as to why it is necessary to visit the site directly, rather than utilize current technology (internet searches, digital archives, databases, or interlibrary loans)

      - For access to special equipment at other universities that is not available at AUC, to population samples or to special sites, <u>applicant shall provide an official invitation letter</u> from the visited

institute/entity to the invitee for the planned visit stating the exact visit dates and the visit purpose.

3. Expenses listed below <u>shall not exceed 40% of the maximum allowed fund</u>.

   - On-line access to specialized archives.

   - Microfilm / microfiche orders.

   - Testing services at AUC and outside laboratories.

   - Software that is justified and for which AUC does not have a license (IT hardware may be approved only in specialized projects and on exceptional basis).

   - Equipment with prior special approval from the AP-RIC.

   - Laboratory supplies and materials.

4. Printing (<u>shall not exceed 10% of the maximum allowed fund</u>).

5. Office supplies and postage (<u>shall not exceed $100</u>).

10. Ineligible Expenses

1. AUC faculty salaries - AUC full time faculty cannot be hired under personnel in this type of grant.

2. Research stipends (for AUC Adjunct Faculty).

3. Honoraria.

4. Cost of preparing a paper for presentation.

5. Travel to collaborative meetings, workshops, learned societies or other association meetings.

6. Travel for conference travel-related expenditure (including registration fees for conferences, workshops, training courses and/or professional society membership fees).

7. Dissemination of research.

8. Hospitality.

9. Editing and binding

11. Procedures

Full time faculty members must adhere to the following procedures when preparing their grant applications:

1. Faculty member submits the application using the online grant submission system at:

2. https://www4.aucegypt.edu/grants/Home.aspx.

3. Office of Research and creativity advancement (ORCA) is responsible for checking the alignment of the submitted details with the guidelines.

4. DRC members receive the submitted applications for review and evaluation within the DRC deadline. In case of no reviews, the application passes to the backup members.

5. If the proposal involves human subjects/participants, faculty member shall contact the Institutional Research Board (IRB) for project approval before or concurrent with the submission of the proposal to the AP-RIC Office.

6. The IRB requires all researchers using human subjects/participants to take a web-based course entitled: "Human Participant Protections Education for Research Teams." This requirement is part of an AUC's initiative to enhance compliance with international standards and regulations for the conduct of clinical and other research involving human participants. If the proposal is approved by AUC, the grant will not be released until the IRB also gives its approval. Please check the IRB website: irb.aucegypt.edu

7. School Dean receives the submitted applications and the DRC reviews for his/her recommendations within the Dean deadline.

8. School Dean can review the application him/herself or delegate his/her Associate Dean to do the review.

9. If the Dean's recommendation does not match that of the DRC, the application is routed to the URB for a final recommendation within the URB deadline.

10. The final decision will be then determined by the AP-RIC.

11. For projects of interdisciplinary nature, relevant members of the URB will assess and provide feedback to ORCA on the value of the proposed interdisciplinarity

12. Deadlines

AUC established two cycles for Research Support Grant. Applications for this grant are submitted online and they are automatically directed to the appropriate Departmental Research Committee (DRC) and Dean for review, followed by University Research Board (URB), if needed, till they reach AP-RIC level for final decision as per the below schedule:

Cycles	Faculty Submission	DRC Recommendation	Dean Recommendation	URB Recommendation	AP-RIC Final Decision
Cycle 1	1-Oct	15-Oct	30-Oct	15-Nov	15-Dec
Cycle 2	1-Mar	15-Mar	30-Mar	15-Apr	15-May

If the deadline happens to be a holiday or a weekend, the deadline will shift to the following working day

13. Grant Management and Oversight

Office of Research and Creativity Advancement (ORCA) is responsible for administering AUC Grants. ORCA monitors the project for administrative and financial compliance with the Grant conditions. ORCA also scrutinizes Grant accounts to ensure timely use. Failure to expend funds in a timely manner may jeopardize eligibility for future AUC intermural grants.

14. Reporting

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Annual Progress Reports: (For Multi-Year Projects)

a. Technical Report: Grantee shall submit all Evaluation/Data/Reports using the online grants system. Annual technical reports are due on the last day of each budget period (June 30th), unless otherwise specified.

b. Financial Report: Annual detailed expenditure reports are due on the last day of each budget period (June 30th) and shall demonstrate use of grant funds as outlined in the annual project budget. Any uncommitted grant funds remaining shall be returned to AUC at the time the final report is submitted online.

Final Report: (For One-Year and Multi-Year Projects)

a. Technical Report: Grantee shall submit Final Evaluation/Data/Reports using the online grants' system. The final technical report is due within (60) days of the end of the Grant period, unless otherwise specified.

b. Financial Report: The final detailed expenditure report is due within (60) days of the end of the Grant period and will demonstrate use of grant funds as outlined in the annual project budget. Expenditure report on the per diem is not requested. Any uncommitted grant funds remaining shall be returned to AUC at the time the final report is submitted online. The financial reports should include proof of payments such as (but not limited to):

- Personnel:

    i. Contract signed by the hired person, the PI and the area head.

    ii. Proof of payment (unless the payment is done through AUC system)

 - Travel:

    i. Clear scanned copy of boarding passes (requested if the grantee is provided Air Ticket and/or Per Diem)

    ii. Clear scanned copy of Air/Bus/Train tickets with prices/receipts

- Equipment, supplies, and services:

    i. Copies of the invoices supporting the costs claimed.

    ii. Details of the physical location of the equipment items (Copy of the goods receipt)

- Proof of payment for any of the funded items stated in the Agreement, on the condition that they comply with the faculty support grants guidelines and that all receipts and invoices abide by the AUC policy and procedures.

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For one-year projects, Final Reports must be submitted online maximum two months after the end date of the project. For multi-year projects, an annual Progress Report must be submitted online by June 30th.

Under any circumstances, all Final Reports must be submitted online before a new application is considered. The reports and their templates are available at: http://www.aucegypt.edu/research/faculty-support-grants

The grant recipient must make a presentation to the faculty members of his/her department with an extended invitation to the Dean and the Associate Deans of his/her school and other concerned faculty to attend such a presentation. Grant recipients will indicate when and where this presentation took place in their final report.

➢ **It is the responsibility of the grantee, with the help of the finance person at the department, to provide all financial documents of each funded item and present them to AP-RIC Office in clarity.**

➢ **All faculty support grants abide by AUC policies and procedures.**