



Joint Research Program between UAE University and Institutions of Asian Universities Alliance (AUA) AY 2020 - 2021

Introduction

The government of United Arab Emirates (UAE) has prioritized seven key areas of strategic importance to the nation; including renewable energy, transportation, education, health, technology, water resources and space exploration. These areas contribute to the realization of the UAE 2021 vision where innovation, research, science and technology form the basis of a productive and competitive knowledge-based economy.

Evolved from its prime responsibility, and as a federal research university, the UAE University is committed to make a positive contribution to the advancement and prosperity of the country by providing quality education and advanced research in areas strategic to the nation and the region. As such, the UAE University has established a number of Research Centers relevant to the key areas of strategic importance and the available resources at the University. These centers provide the appropriate platform for national, regional and international research collaboration aiming at resolving scientific problems, creating new knowledge and meeting future challenges. These Research Centers include:

- Emirates Center for Energy and Environment Research
- Roadway Transportation & Traffic Safety Research Center
- National Space Science and Technology Center
- National Water Center
- Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan Center for Health Sciences
- Khalifa Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology
- UAEU Center for Public Policy and Leadership
- Emirates Center for Happiness Research
- Big Data Analytics Center

In response to the recent developments and risks associated with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak that started in Wuhan, China, and noting that the disease has been diagnosed in more than 100 other countries, including most of AUA countries, UAE University is highly encouraging related scientific research targeting its repression and effective treatment of the infected population.

In addition to research proposals related to COVID-19 and the above Research Centers, UAE University will continue to support basic science research projects that would clearly contribute to the advancement of the body of knowledge in the different disciplines.

Initiative and Purpose

UAE University is allocating an annual fund to support joint-research projects with other members of the AUA. This fund might be used to provide additional support, through covering the hotel accommodation, for scholars visiting UAEU under the AUA Scholars Award Program for a maximum duration of 15 days.

The purpose of this initiative to establish a long-term, high-quality research collaboration between UAE University and other members of AUA that share the same research expectations and interests. It is strongly believed that developing the research capacity of UAE University and enhancing its quality will be reflected positively on the educational mission and



the quality and standards of life in UAE and the broader region. To that end, the UAE University is funding a new line of research to establish solid collaboration between UAE University and other AUA universities.

Eligibility to Benefit from UAEU-AUA Joint Research Projects

All full-time regular and research faculty members affiliated to any of the universities within the AUA body are eligible to benefit from UAEU-AUA joint research program provided that they: (1) have a faculty collaborator (PI) from UAE University, (2) members of the research team have proven research records, and (3) have the approval of their own university to apply for such grants. In all cases, the PI must be from UAE University.

Interested faculty/research groups from UAE University or AUA institutions should identify relevant counterparts from the other institution through direct communications or through university/colleges websites. The counterparts are expected to communicate with each other to identify possible areas/topics of collaboration based on their current research domain and agenda. If desired, interested faculty from AUA institutions may write to the Research Office (research.office@uaeu.ac.ae and copied to msherif@uaeu.ac.ae) to identify relevant collaborators from UAE University. Based on the nature of the project and the required expertise and resources, research projects may involve more than one University from AUA other than UAEU. All contributing faculty must be from AUA institutions.

Submission of Research Proposals

An on-line system has been developed within the platform of the Grant Management System at UAE University to accept submission and follow up on the progress of activities of the on- going projects. The deadline for submission of full length proposal is Tuesday June 30th, 2020. All submissions will be subjected to internal and external review. Submissions must be made electronically through the Grant Management System by faculty members from UAE University. The proposal must include one or more Co-PI(s) for AUA Institutions.

Full-length Proposals

Full-length proposals should include detailed information related to: (1) Review of relevant literature and previous work (2) Objectives of the project, (3) Significance of the proposed work, (4) New contributions and impact of the work, (5) Research methodology, (6) Expected outcomes and deliverables, (7) Time schedule of the activities, (8) Required budget and distribution of expenses, (9) List of References, and (10) Curriculum vitas of the Principle Investigators and other members of the team. The full-length proposal should also outline any possible conflict of interest and other challenges. Once the full proposal is submitted, the PIs should be able to review its status on-line.

Processing and Review of Full-length Proposals

All submitted proposals will be initially reviewed by the concerned body within the relevant Colleges/Centers and the Research Affairs of UAE University to ensure they are in compliance with the general guidelines, include all the required information, and are ready for peer review. A minimum of three qualified external reviewers will be identified to evaluate each proposal. The evaluation will be based on the following criteria.



1. Novelty and merit of the proposal
2. Importance and relevance of the subject matter of the proposed work to UAEU and the counterparts from AUA
3. Potential impact of the outcomes of the project
4. Expected articles to be published in top-ranked journals
5. Appropriateness of the proposed methodology and time schedule
6. Requested budget and possible additional fund provided from other institutions or the industry.
7. Utilization of available resources and facilities.
8. Successful completion of previous projects.
9. Qualifications of PI, Co-PI and other members involved in the project

Successful proposals should be of the highest quality and have a clear potentiality to resolve imminent problems or advance the frontiers of knowledge within a specific discipline. They should also contribute in a broader manner in achieving the national agenda and strategic initiatives of the UAE University. After all reviews and consideration of the available budget, a decision will be made on the funding of the project following the regular process at UAE University.

For AUA proposals, an exception is made to allow faculty members of UAEU having two on-going internally funded projects to apply. However, faculty members having an on-going AUA projects are not eligible to apply or act as Co-PI of AUA proposals.

Duration, Budget, and Use of Available Resources

The maximum duration of UAEU-AUA joint research projects is 2 years. For lab-based projects, the maximum budget is AED 500K (US\$ 135K). For non-lab based projects, the maximum budget is AED 250K (US\$ 68K).

It is highly recommended to use the available resources, labs and testing equipment in the collaborating universities rather than purchasing new equipment. Priority of funding will be given to projects utilizing the available facilities.

Compensation for PIs and other Faculty Members

UAE University regards all scholarly activities as one of the major duties of faculty members. Therefore, compensation against time spent on such joint-research projects is deemed to already been included within the faculty member's regular salary. However, PIs, Co-PIs and other faculty members may receive compensation for working outside the term of their appointment or during the official summer vacation time. In all cases, such compensation should not exceed AED 20,000 for the PI and other members from each institute and may not exceed AED 40,000 per year for all the members of the project.



On-Line Applications for UAEU-AUA Joint-Research Proposals

The proposal should include the following sections.

Project Title:
Summary: 150 words maximum- Summarize the proposal in a simple language that the public can understand. Describe the nature of the work to be conducted. Indicate why this research is important, the anticipated outcomes and benefits. This summary might be made available to the public if the proposal is funded.
Summary: (Translation, Arabic)
Abstract: (Maximum 300 words)
Key words: (Maximum 5 words)
Description: (Maximum 6 pages) This section describes the background and understanding of current literature pertaining to the problem addressed, the overall objectives/goals of the research proposed, and the experimental approach (research plan) proposed to accomplish those goals. In general, this section should address the following questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Discuss the major research objectives, and challenge(s) will the project address and why is this research important? ii. What work has already been done that is relevant to your research goals? Give a brief review and assessment of prior research with appropriate citations. iii. How will the problem(s) be addressed? Describe the proposed approaches and plans to solve the proposed problem. iv. Why is the proposed research likely to succeed? The identified flaws in previous approaches might be pointed out.
Hypothesis: Explain the research question and the hypothesis
Rationale: Statements of rationale and significance should be included throughout the proposal (where appropriate), and then summarized in this section. Reasons for focusing on your hypotheses and objectives. What major research challenge(s) will the project address and why is this research challenge significant? How is the proposed study innovative and supportive of the UAEU research goals?
Methodology: This section may vary depending on the type of research project (field research, laboratory study, computer study, data collection procedures, proposed analytic methods, and statistical tools used). Describe the techniques and tasks in sufficient details to allow the reviewers to judge whether the project will achieve the stated objectives.
Expected outcomes (achievements): (Maximum 1 page) Describe the expected outcomes and potential for applications for the proposed work.
Qualifications of the PI and Co-PI's: (Briefly describe each member's role in the project and highlight how their research experience will enable them to use the tools and methods required to meet project objectives.
BIBLIOGRAPHY: List all the references cited.

Budget		
Budget (expenditures)	Year 1 AED	Year 2 AED
Salary and Benefits for RAs: <i>with a maximum of AED 100,000 per year inclusive of health insurance, etc., Ph.D. and M.Sc. students might be appointed.</i>		
Equipment or facility: <i>purchase, rental, maintenance of equipment (Utilizing available facilities is recommended)</i>		
Materials and supplies: <i>consumables, chemicals, and customized reagents/material</i>		
Travel: <i>With a maximum of AED 15,000 per year. This fund is only available to CoPIs from collaboration AUA institution to visit UAE University to cover air ticket and hotel accommodation only.</i>		
Dissemination Cost: <i>Covers journal publication cost, organization of a Conference or a Symposium, with a maximum of AED 6,000 per year.</i>		
Other, specify		
Salary for PI/CoPI/ other members: may not exceed 20,000 per institution		
Total		
Grand Total		

Final Decision and Fund Allocation

Based on the results of the internal and external review and the alignment of the proposed research with the university strategic initiatives, the Research Council of UAE University will provide its recommendation on the possible funding of proposals. The appropriateness of the requested budget and full-utilization of the available facilities rather than purchasing of new equipment will be considered by the Research Council.

The final decision will be made by Vice Chancellor of UAE University by September 15th, 2020 considering all available reviews and recommendations.

Interim, Annual and Final Reports

PIs must submit, through the Grant Management System, interim reports every 6 months (end of June), an annual report at the end of the first year of the project and a final report at the end of the project. All submitted reports must include detailed information elaborating the progress of activities, results achieved, and analysis and discussions of the results. The report should also include budget statement elaborating the actual expenses versus itemized budget allocation.

The general information about the accepted and on-going projects shall be reported to the AUA members, including but not limited to the participants' names and institutions, the brief summary of the project, the amount of funding, and the project outcomes. Some of the information will also be disclosed to the public through the AUA website or annual report.

**Important Deadlines**

Submission of full-length proposals	June 30 th , 2020
Completion of the internal and external review	Sept, 15 th
Decision of the UAEU Vice Chancellor	Sept, 22 nd
Announcement of awarding	Sept, 29 th
Allocation of funds	October 1 st

Inquiries and related matters

For any inquiries and related questions, please write to Prof. Mohsen Sherif, Director of Research and Sponsored Projects, UAE University “msherif@uaeu.ac.ae” and cc: “research.office@uaeu.ac.ae”.