Q&A Session about RDIA Grants

Q1. What is the maximum involvement of a faculty member in RDIA Grants?

Answer: A faculty member can be involved in 1 project as a PI in one grant with the maximum involvement of 3 as PI and 2 as Co-I in all grants. However, the maximum compensation will be for 3 projects at the same time.

Q2. Will these Grants be announced annually?

Answer: Yes, the RDIA plan is to announce these Grants Annually.

Q3. How long will it take to receive the final decision about the proposal approval?

Answer: It will take a maximum of 2-3 months.

Q4. Is there a maximum limit of projects per organization to be approved by RDIA under each grant?

Answer: No, it is on merit basis. It depends on the quality of the proposals and their review.

Q5. How many pre-proposals can a faculty member submit at max?

Answer: The main aim of the pre-proposals is to verify their alignment with KFUPM Research and Innovation Strategy and RDIA guidelines. There is no limit but should abide by RDIA maximum submission limit.

Q6. Can we hire Postdocs through these Grants?

Answer: Yes, based on the guidelines, hiring team members with BSc, MSc and PhD degrees is possible with a salary range defined under Full-time assistants.

Q7. Is affiliation with a Research Center a must before submitting a proposal?

Answer: No, but it's highly encouraged for non-affiliated faculty to affiliate with Research Centers to access more support.

Q8. Can a Postdoc be a PI of these Grants?

Answer: No, Postdocs are hired for a limited time and expected to work under the supervision of a faculty. They can be involved as CO-I or Part-time PhD holder assistants. The maximum compensation is 3 projects at the same time.

Q9. Can International personnel be involved as Co-I's in these Grants?

Answer: No. All members outside KFUPM will be considered as Consultants.

Q10. Will the procurement through these Grants be like NSTIP?

Answer: The plans are to make them better than NSTIP in terms of time and procedures.

Q11. For Applied Research, are patents must?

Answer: Each track has its own guidelines and requirements. However, patents are highly encouraged for further findings.

Q12. If a patent is registered outside the Kingdom, is it acceptable?

Answer: Yes, however it should be developed in the Kingdom.

Q13. Collaboration with international faculty usually requires support to cover potential graduate students or Postdocs at the International Institutions for collaboration to take place. Is this possible?

Answer: Maximum of 40% of the budget can go to International partners with clear strong justification why this work cannot be carried out at KFUPM, KACST or other University in Saudi Arabia.

Q14. What are the IP rights in these Grants?

Answer: The IP rights are according to KFUPM IP policies. The IP office at KFUPM must be consulted before making an agreement with international partners.

Q15. Under Technology Breakthrough Grant (TBG), can the partners be from highly reputed Institutions instead of Industry?

Answer: No problem, industry or institution.

Q16. For a proposal to be accepted, how tightly should it be related to RDIA strategies?

Answer: There are 4 national priorities by RDI (Sustainable Environment & Essential needs, Energy & Industrial leadership, Health & Wellness, Economic of Future). It is highly recommended to align as closely as possible with published

strategy we per the guidelines for each grant. However, if the proposal is partially related to a priority, it is acceptable.

Q17. Can we have Co-I's from other Institutions for BSG?

Answer: No, all external members outside KFUPM will be considered as consultants.

Q18. What is the maximum limit of team members in 1 proposal?

Answer: There is no such limit, the number of team members depends on the research work to be conducted and it's part of the evaluation by the reviewers. It is highly recommended to limit Co-Is to two at most.

Q19. What is the percentage of local members Vs. International members in a proposal?

Answer: There is no constraint, this will depend on the nature of research and the necessity with the proper justification on the added-value. However, the ultimate goal is to sustain and build local capacity in these domains at KFUPM.

Q20. Can we purchase major equipment through these Grants?

Answer: Yes.

Q21. Will involving Highly Cited Researchers in the project team give it higher chance/priority for awarding?

Answer: No. Proposal evaluation will be merit-based and based on fulfilling the Grant conditions and requirements and the positive feedback of the reviewers.

Q22. For International partners, should the consent be at the individual level consent or institutional level?

Answer: Both are ok. However, the individual level consent is preferred in which he/she will have to obtain the consent from his/her institution.

Q23. Are international Co-I's allowed in Young Scholar Grant (YSG) and Basic Science Grant (BSG)?

Answer: No. They are only allowed in Research Consortium Grant (RCG).

Q24. There are four main focus areas (main RDIA national priorities) and specific national priority topics. Does a proposal have to address specific national priority topic(s) only or is it sufficient to have it aligned with main focus areas?

Answer: The mentioned national priority specific topics are intended as guidance to the applicant, and as long as their proposal fits in the generic main national priority areas that will be acceptable. It will be good to have the proposal related to specific national priority.

Q25. Can a staff member with an MSc degree be involved as a Co-I?

Answer: No, senior team members have to be PhD holders. Staff members with MSc degrees can be involved as assisting team members.

Q26. Can Research Scientists and Engineers in the RI get compensation through these Grants?

Answer: Yes. However there are special terms and conditions. RI PhD-holder researchers can be compensated for max of two projects under Basic Science Initiative and remaining under the Applied Research and Technology Initiative. The University is highly encouraging researchers to lead as many projects as possible under the Applied Research and Technology Initiative.

Q27. Can applicants from the Entrepreneurship Institute participate in these Grants?

Answer: Yes, all KFUPM departments are encouraged to participate.

Q28. For Start-up, is the scientific part necessary?

Answer: Yes.

Q29. For a Research Consortium Grant (RCG), should it be limited to the specified topics?

Answer: Yes. It is important to focus on the specified Grant Research Topics as per the Guidelines.

Q30. What about the involvement of the MATH department?

Answer: Faculty and researchers in the Math Department, or from other basic sciences, can get involved and participate as long as their proposals are aligned with the topics in the Call for Proposals.

Q31. How basic science disciplines like Mathematics can be mapped to research priorities?

Answer: Link the proposal to one of the priorities and clearly explain the linkage in the proposal.

Q32. Is the 3 projects compensations limit valid for all categories or only for PIs and Co-Is?

Answer: The compensations are limited to only three per month in all categories.

Q33. How is the compensation for graduate students look like? What is the limit?

Answer: The graduate students (PhD and Master students) are considered in the category of Technicians and Administrators and will be compensated 2800 SAR/month.

Q34. How is the compensation for undergraduate students look like?

Answer: The graduate students are considered in the category of Professionals (Skillful Labors) and will be compensated 1600 SAR/month.

Q35. All compensations are for 10-months. How about if the faculty decided to stay during their annual vacation to perform research on the project. The compensation should be at least 10,000/month (similar to NSTIP).

Answer: In case of hiring on the project (such as postdocs) the compensation is for 12 months not only 10 months (refer to Assistants – Full time, in the guidelines, table 3).

Q36. Is the maximum involvement of 5 projects as PI and CoI based on the grants or initiatives?

Answer: The maximum involvement of 5 projects is based on the grants.

Q37. Is the maximum involvement of 3 projects as PI based on the grants or initiatives?

Answer: The maximum involvement of 3 projects is based on the grants.

Q38. Under the hiring of full-time under these projects, how we should cover other expenses like health insurance, GOSI, housing allowance ...etc?

Answer: The Salaries for Project Contracts should cover all other expenses. For example, in the case of hiring a Postdoc, 12k SAR / month salary will cover health insurance, GOSI, housing allowance ...etc.

Q39. Is the institution overhead calculation on top of budget or part of the budget (I,e, for the basic science grant the max is 1.6 million, will the overhead going to be included and the total should not exceed 1.6 or the project cost can be 1.6 million and overhead will be added to that?

Answer: The overhead cost will be included within the total budget. So, the overhead cost (10% of the total budget) must be added as an item in the project budget.

Q40. We learned that the "limit for Reactivating and rebuilding labs" has changed. Do you have the update limits?

Answer: 4 M SAR / proposal (maximum 3 proposals / entity)

Q41. for the consortium application: (RCG)

a) is co-funding a requirement?

Answer: NO, but it is encouraged.

b) is it limited to organization inside the Kingdom or organizations outside are accepted?

Answer: At least 1 of the 3 applicants must be in KSA. Any other combination is possible, for example:

> 1 Saudi university and 4 Local Industries, OR

> 1 Saudi university and 2 International universities and 3 local industries.

c) are the partners supposed to be Universities?

Answer: No, but industrial partner is prioritized in the reviewing process; as stated in the guidelines.

d) is funding expected to shared with partners?

Answer: For international partner(s), there is a limit to the shared fund (max of 40% of the total budget) provided that the fund use will be clearly justified in the proposal. For local partners, justify the shared fund in the proposal between all parties.

Q42. How do I access the National Grants Portal System?

Answer: To access the National Grants Portal System, simply visit the official website (https://grants.rdia.gov.sa) and follow the provided login instructions (User guidelines).

Q43. How do I register to use the Grants Portal?

Answer: To register for the Grants Portal, you'll need a unique email address (Official email ended with .sa) and mobile number to complete the sign-up process on the portal's website. Simply click on the registration link (https://grants.rdia.gov.sa) and follow the provided instructions.

Q44. How do I apply for a grant once I'm logged into the portal? And can I apply for more than one grant program at a time? Which file types are acceptable for uploading?

Answer: To apply for a grant, log into the portal and navigate to the grant application section. Follow the instructions provided for each grant program you're interested in. If you are eligible for multiple grant programs, you may be able to apply for them separately. During the application process, you will be prompted to upload any required documents. Make sure to review the specific file types accepted for uploading (ex. pdf, docx). Once your application is complete, follow the instructions to submit it. For more information, please follow this link (User guidelines).

Q45. How can I access an application that I've already submitted? What do the various application statuses on the Application Status page signify?

Answer: You can retrieve all of your submitted applications through your grant portal dashboard. This enables you to review the application's specifics, observe its status (e.g., accepted, in progress, rejected), and consider any feedback offered by the reviewers, allowing you to take appropriate actions.

Q46. How much time do I have to work on my application?

Answer: The timeframe to work on your application varies depending on the grant program and its guidelines. It is important to review the specific grant's instructions and deadlines.

Q47. I've submitted an application and I need to make changes. What should I do?

Answer: In case you need to modify your submitted application, contact your STU/RDIU for assistant.

Q48. How is "innovation" evaluated?

Answer: The assessment of "innovation" takes place through a peer-review process. It hinges on factors such as the originality of the proposal, its potential to create an impact, and the viability of the outlined research plan.

Q49. Can I delete or withdraw a submitted proposal?

Answer: Absolutely, you have the option to delete or withdraw a submitted proposal. To proceed, kindly consult the guidelines available within the grant portal or get in touch with the grant support team at (GRANTS-INFO@rdia.gov.sa) for comprehensive instructions.

Q50. In what language can I submit my application?

Answer: You can submit your application in English (default) and Arabic for some fields.

Q51. Does RDIA fund non-Saudi researchers?

Answer: RDIA does provide funding for non-Saudi researchers. However, it's important to note that non-Saudi researchers must be associated with a Saudi institution in order to meet the eligibility criteria for funding.

Q52. Does the portal have specific grants? What is the typical duration of the grants?

Answer: The portal offers a diverse range of grants specifically designed to address the national priorities: Health and Wellness, Sustainable Environment and Supply of Essential Needs, Energy and Industrial Leadership, and Economies of the Future. These grants include:

- Young Scholars Grant (YSG)
- Basic Science Grant (BSG)
- Exploratory Consortium Grant (ECG)
- Baseload Applied Grant (BAG)
- Technology Development Grant (TDG)

- Technology Breakthrough Grant (TBG)
- Reactivation and Rebuilding Grants (RRG) for Existing Labs

Typically, grants have a duration of three years, although the specific duration may vary depending on the requirements. For more detailed information, please refer to the guidelines provided for each grant.

Q53. Are there formal funding deadlines on the portal? Do unsuccessful applicants receive feedback?

Answer: The funding deadlines are specified for each program. Please, refer to the program's guidelines for more information.

Yes, unsuccessful applicants will receive feedback on their applications.

Q54. Where can I find information on grants I am eligible for?

Answer: You can locate information regarding grants that you are eligible for within the grant guidelines. For more information, please visit https://rdia.gov.sa/grants .

Q55. Are there grants available for students?

Answer: Certainly, RDIA provides grants for students. While there are currently no dedicated grants available for students, they have the opportunity to participate in ongoing research projects as part of the existing research teams. For more information, please visit https://rdia.gov.sa/grants .

Q56. What is the purpose and function of the National Grants Portal?

Answer: The National Grants Portal serves as a comprehensive hub for government grants. It functions as a centralized platform where researchers, innovators, and entrepreneurs can easily discover and apply for various government grants.

Q57. How can I stay updated on new funding announcements through the portal?

Answer: You can stay updated on new funding announcements through the portal by visiting (https://www.rdia.gov.sa) and following RDIA on social media (https://twitter.com/rdia,https://www.linkedin.com/company/research-development-and-innovation-authority-rdia/).

Q58. What are the accessibility features and recommended approach for students with disabilities to apply through the portal?

Answer: The current portal does not support accessibility features for people with disabilities. Efforts are underway to implement necessary improvements and ensure inclusivity for all users.

Q59. How to apply to the Reactivation and Rebuilding Grants (RRG) for Existing Labs?

Answer: The STU/RDIU are responsible for submitting applications. Please, consult your STU/RDIU to register your application.

Q60. What is the overhead rate for institutions within the kingdom? How does the overhead rate differ for international partners?
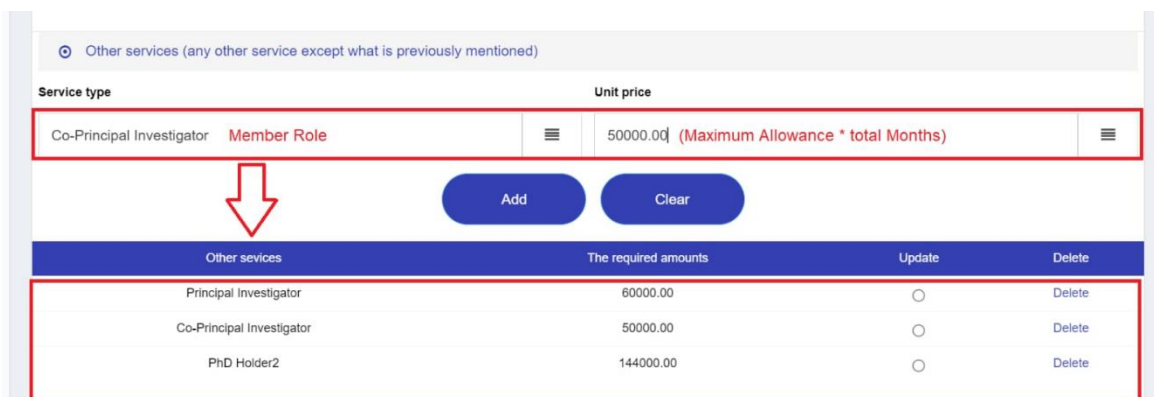
Answer: According to our bylaws, grants provided to both in-kingdom institutions and international partners are exempt from any overhead fees. However, it is important to note that 10% of the total budget of any grant is allocated for operational costs associated with the STU/RDIU.

Q60. How is the review process conducted to evaluate applications?

Answer: All applications will undergo a thorough review process conducted by specialized committees, as outlined in the guidelines.

Q61. The International consultants/collaborators are unable to accept the invitation. How to add them?

Answer: International personnel cannot access the portal and therefore you need to use "other services" to add external teams. Please see the image below:

Q62. The system itself calculates the budget for team members which is creating lot of discrepancies.

Answer: Yes, this is correct, but what will be considered by RDIA is the attached budget sheet with the application (PDF attachment).