

2025-2027 RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

APPROVED BY UNIVERSITY COUNCIL



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List of Abbreviations

ASIC	Accreditation Service for International Schools
AY	Academic Year
BFP	Block Funding Program
CAAS	College of Arts and Applied Sciences
CCBA	College of Commerce and Business Administration
CE	College of Engineering
CL	College of Law
CM	College of Medicine
CPS	Centre for Preparatory Studies
CPSRC	Centre for Preparatory Studies Research Committee
CRC	College Research Committee
DDR	Director of Department of Research
DR	Department of Research
DU	Dhofar University
DURC	Dhofar University Research Centre
DVC	Deputy Vice Chancellor
EFCG	Externally Funded Conference Grant
FURAP	Faculty mentored Undergraduate Research Award Program
GRG	Graduate Research Grant
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
IEFG	Incentive for Externally Funded Grant
IP	Intellectual Property
IPEC	Institutional Proposal Evaluation Committee
OAAAQA	Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education
RG	Research Grant
RG score	ResearchGate score
RIA	Research and Innovation Authority
SMEs	Small Medium Enterprises
SRG	Strategic Research Grant Program
URC	University Research Committee
UREBC	University Research Ethics & Biosafety Committee
URG	Undergraduate Research Grant
VC	Vice-Chancellor

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1. Introduction

Research is an integral part of any academician's career growth and one has to make continuous endeavour to 'create knowledge' i.e. to do research. The faculty is expected to make such endeavours to keep a balance between teaching and the research.

Dhofar University (DU) was established in 2004 and since then it is serving the community through exemplary education, research and community outreach. DU recognizes research as one of the main pillars of academic excellence as explicitly mentioned in its mission statement. All efforts are being made to encourage research among its faculty members, staff and students and to create a conducive environment for credible research.

In its strategic plan DU has envisaged to create a hub of research activity beneficial to the region. To achieve this, DU established a Department of Research (DR) that works under direct supervision of the Deputy Vice Chancellor. It strives to create a favourable research environment within DU by encouraging, facilitating and promoting all research activities across the University. The DR works on three major principles i.e. engagement, innovation and impact.

The University also has a University Research Committee (URC) and the University Research Ethics & Biosafety Committee (UREBC) that are tasked to help DR foster and improve the conducive research within DU while maintaining ethical research standards.

Dhofar University Research Center focuses on niche areas of Research of regional importance, dealt with in different Research units and develop strategically important local and national topics. For more details, please refer to www.du.edu.om/research

1.1 Research Governance at DU

The research at DU is governed and funded at three levels i.e., at national level by Research and Innovation Authority (RIA), at University level by Department of Research (DR), University Research Committee (URC), Institutional Proposal Evaluation Chair (IPEC) & Research Focal Point (RFP) and the Research Centre, and at College/CPS level by College Research Committee (CRC) or Centre for Preparatory Studies Research Committee (CPSRC).

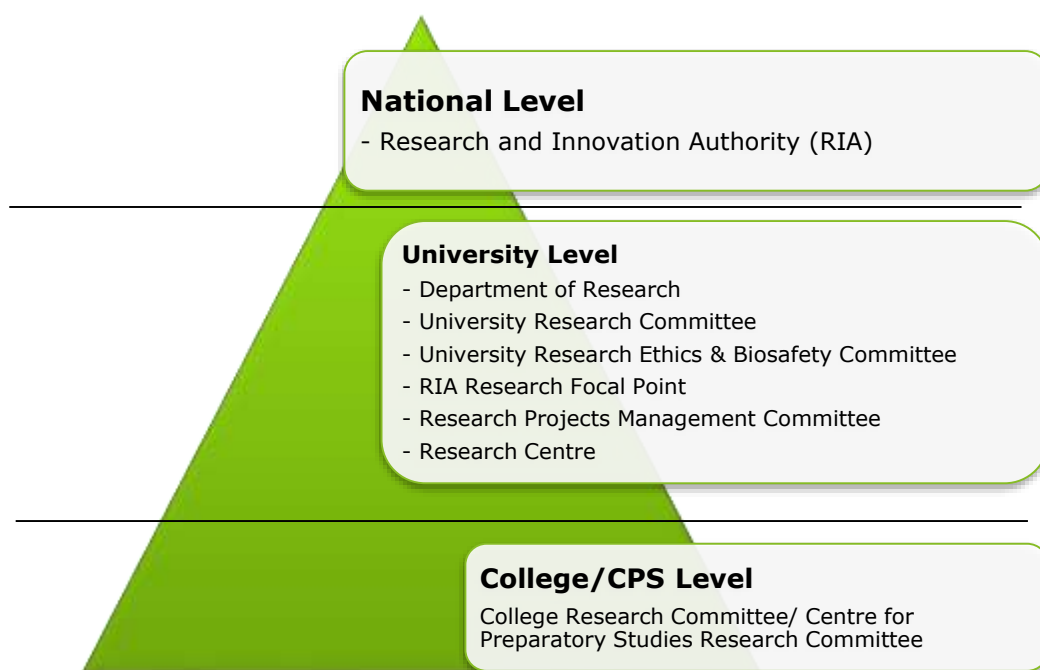


Figure 1.: Research Governance at DU

1.1.1 National Level: Research and Innovation Authority

The Research and Innovation Authority (RIA) is the governmental body in the Sultanate of Oman responsible for supervising Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the development of high education policies, research & innovation in the Sultanate. Its vision is to create an innovation ecology that is responsive to local needs and international trends, fosters social harmony, and leads to creativity and excellence. The research & Innovation wing at RIA serves as a focal point and hub dedicated to promoting and supporting research, scientific enquiry, and innovation in the Sultanate of Oman. RIA provides research funds for faculty and students through various research grants. It manages the funded projects externally only. The Department of Research manages the grant internally at DU and ensures that the faculty and the students who receive research funds abide by RIA's policies, rules, and regulations for that particular research grant. Following are the research programs set by RIA in light of Oman Vision 2040, the national plans and strategies of various sectors in the country, and an understanding of the successful experiences witnessed across the globe:

1. Block Funding Program (BFP): Includes Research Grant (RG), Graduate Research Grant (GRG) and Undergraduate Research Grant (URG)
2. Strategic Research Grant Program (SRG)
3. Smart City Platform
4. The National Research Award
5. Research and Innovations Award in Water Science
6. Upgrade Program
7. Adapting Towards Sustainable Development Program
8. EJAAD
9. Industrial Innovation Assistance Program
10. Conference and Workshop Support Program
11. Publication Support Program

(For more details on RIA Research Programs please visit the website: <https://orp.trc.gov.om/?lang=en>)

(Source: Oman Research Portal website)

1.1.2 University Level: Department of Research

In the capacity of a principal Research agency, the main role of the DR is to provide Research leadership and support to the University, which entails the following responsibilities:

- Promoting and facilitating independent, collaborative, interdisciplinary & multidisciplinary Research & innovation in the University.
- Identifying niche areas of interest important to Dhofar region in particular and Oman in general.
- Building and providing adequate support to develop a community of innovative researchers at the University.
- Fostering and stimulating Research efforts and creative projects by providing internal research grants, incentives & awards.
- Acting as a focal point between the University and RIA.
- Implementing and revising the Operational Plan for Research.
- Establishing and reviewing research policies.
- Managing the University's Research budget.
- To encourage and mentor the faculty members and students to obtain various Research grants from DU, RIA or other external funding agencies.
- Preparing the annual report and any other reports related to the Research.

- Guiding and facilitating University/College/CPS Research Committees in their operations.
- Ensuring objective, ethical and responsible conduct of Research in the University.
- Promoting the strategic goal of DU being a hub of Research in Dhofar region by supporting impactful and innovative research activities.
- Developing networks between DU researchers, industry and the community with respect to Research initiatives of mutual benefit.

Promoting Strategic Topics of Interest to Oman:

In order to focus on the strategic topics of interest to Oman, the DR is responsible to:

- Encourage DU faculty in each department to participate Research interest groups that may also involve DU students.
- Provide literature and necessary guidance to each Research group related to funding strategic Research through RIA's Strategic Research Program or internal grants & incentives.

Linking Omani Researchers to International Researchers

Research is essential to nation building as it underpins progress, economic growth and prosperity. It also helps us better equip and train the workforce and encourages creativity and innovations as it leads to greater entrepreneurship and helps industry grow. In short, Research makes the nation more competitive in the global economy. As per the National Research Strategy for Oman, the government has been actively taking steps to promote quality Research among young Omani researchers. In order to support the government to achieve its goals, the DR at DU is responsible to:

- Encourage collaborative Research through joint papers and Research projects with Omani researchers.
- Encourage young Omani researchers to participate in international conferences, workshops and seminars.
- Encourage young Omani researchers to apply for membership in academic and professional international associations.
- Encourage Omani Master students to publish their Research work.
- Develop a database of active Omani researchers in Omani institutions of higher education and invite them for Research-oriented lectures and seminars.
- Sign collaborative Research MoUs with other national/international universities to focus on joint Research of interests and ensure maximum involvement of Omani researchers.
- Publish research activities and achievements of young Omani researchers annually.

1.1.3 University Level: University Research Committee

The URC acts in an advisory capacity to the Department of Research to help foster and improve the research environment at DU. It consists of two representatives from each College and a representative from the Centre for Preparatory Studies (CPS) nominated by the College council or CPS Director for a term of two years, renewable for a similar term. The Chairperson, his/her assistant and any additional members are appointed by the DVC. Its main tasks are to advise DR in:

- Formulating research policies and guidelines to ensure research impact and excellence.
- Approving applications for internal grants & incentives, conducting research or other works in DU that involved data collection, interviews with DU community, and filling questionnaires to ensure ethics and bio-safety.
- Editing and publishing the research activities report of the University every year.
- Facilitate collaboration with other universities.
- Help the Colleges/CPS organize international conferences at DU.

1.1.4 University Level: University Research Ethics & Biosafety Committee

Dhofar University has a strong commitment to maintain high ethical standards in all spheres and the domain of research in particular. Research activities have to take into account the various factors including but not limited to plagiarism, environment and biosafety. Dhofar University has a well-defined Research Ethics & Code of Conduct Policy that applies to all employees, students and visiting researchers.

The DU Ethics & Biosafety Committee is chaired by the Chair of the University Research Committee and the members are the Chairs of the respective College Research Committee from each of the College and the CPS. Additional member can be invited with expertise in the relevant disciplines when and where required. The main tasks are to:

- Ensure that research is conducted in a responsible and ethical manner taking into account the basic principles and guidelines in the DU's Research Ethics & Code of Conduct Policy.
- Review research proposals involving human participants or animals to ensure that the intended research is in compliance with the ethical practices of DU as guided by its Research Ethics & Code of Conduct Policy.
- Ascertain that all cases of research misconduct are handled in accordance with the DU Research Ethics & Code of Conduct Policy.
- Handle the reported cases related to the misconduct of research.
- Familiarize all the members (staff and students) of the university and external collaborators/visitors (where applicable) with Dhofar University's Research Ethics & Code of Conduct Policy.
- Protect the research interests (rights and safety) of the researchers and the university.
- Promote high ethical standards in research and adopt best practices.

1.1.5 University Level: RIA Research Focal Point & Research Projects Management Committee (RPMC)

As per the requirement by RIA; DU has nominated a Research Focal Point (RFP) and the Research Projects Management Committee (RPMC) Chair. The RFP assists and guides the faculty members in applying for and managing different RIA funded grants whereas the RPMC is tasked to evaluate and rank the submitted proposals. This committee also follows up and evaluate research projects progress and final reports. manage the entire internal and external evaluation process of proposals submitted to RIA for funding.

1.1.6 University Level: Dhofar University Research Centre

As a part of its mission to promote quality Research and to become the hub of all Research activities in the region, DU has setup a Research Centre. The center focuses on few niche areas of Research of regional importance, dealt with in different Research units. The clusters support and develop strategically important local and national topics such as Conservation of biodiversity, frankincense and medicinal plants, sustainable development of Dhofar mountains and coastal areas, issues related to livestock and agriculture, computer and information security, enhanced oil recovery, youth issues, languages, cultural heritage and society, improved traffic system, e-society in Oman, cancer detection and classification, remote sensing, Entrepreneurship and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) etc. For 'Frankincense, Medicinal plants & Biodiversity', a fully operational Research lab has already been set up and is operational.

1.1.7 College (CPS) level: College (CPS) Research Committee

The CRC /CPSRC comprises of senior faculty members chosen from all the departments/ units of the College/CPS who are entrusted with the task of fostering a good research environment in

the college. All members are appointed by the Dean of the college/Director of CPS and serve for a period of two academic years. The members are responsible for advising, formulating recommendations, and providing information to the URC on University's Research operational and strategic plan, Research-education, policies, guidelines, procedures and evaluating internal grants.

1.1.8 DU Research Policies

DU has established policies for the implementation of various aspects of research and consultancy. These include:

Consultancy Policy

DU has a large pool of qualified and research-oriented faculty with a rich experience in consultancy and on the other hand, the Sultanate of Oman, and especially the Dhofar Region, is witnessing a rapid development in various sectors, which provides a huge scope for consultancy. In view of this, DU aims to provide a favourable atmosphere for its faculty and staff to embark on consultancy activities. The University considers consultancy as an essential professional activity related to the faculty's area of expertise, skills and research and a tool for providing solutions to various challenges in business, social, economic, and technical areas. It is perceived as an activity that is mutually beneficial to the faculty, university, industry and society in general. DU considers consultancy work as an important contribution from the University to society, through the transfer of knowledge and expertise to businesses, industry, and community.

Intellectual Property Policy

DU encourages and supports its students, faculty, and staff members in bringing the results of their research, consultancy and other similar activities in diverse fields of knowledge to public use and benefit, and encourages their commercial development, subject to protecting the University's rights. The main aim behind developing the Intellectual Property (IP) Policy is to encourage advancement of technology and its transfer for public benefit. The policy defines the ownership and rights of the inventor(s)/creator(s) and the University and provides procedures, guidelines and a governing mechanism.

Ethics Policy

All living beings (human and non-human) have been bestowed with certain fundamental rights around the world. The purpose of DU Ethics policy is to respect the moral rights of living beings and also lay down fundamental ethical principles for all research activities conducted on them at university. DU also reserves the rights to protect non-human living beings and ensure that the experiments involving them are conducted in a safe and socially responsible manner. This policy applies to all leading investigators, staff members, students and researchers engaged in approved research projects on university premises which involve human, animal, or genetic ethical considerations. The policy also applies to all DU contractors, suppliers and business partners, wherever appropriate.

Bio-safety Policy

The research activities carried out by DU staff members may involve the use of bio-hazardous materials or may result in the generation of bio-hazardous waste. The biosafety policy is to ensure that all research activities involving bio-hazardous materials are well managed and controlled by providing comprehensible procedures and guidelines for approval of such research projects and for safe handling, storage, use and disposal of bio hazardous material. It is also ensured that the staff, students, and researchers involved in these projects are aware of the risks associated with the handling of bio-hazardous materials and take the necessary precautions.

Research Ethics and Code of Conduct Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish fundamental principles of research ethics and code of conduct which will serve as the foundation for research conducted at DU. The University expects all those conducting research to honor these principles and adopt them as standard practice, irrespective of whether they are employees, students or visiting researchers and irrespective of the source of their funding or the field in which they conduct their research or the site where the research is conducted. However, there are bound to be instances of violations of research ethics and code of conduct. Therefore, it is necessary to provide a well-defined procedure for ensuring adherence to research ethics and code of conduct.

1.1.9 Professional Development for Research

DU provides well-defined and organized professional development opportunities to its academic staff to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and expertise to achieve DU's strategic objectives for research. The University provides both in-house and external professional development opportunities. Staff development needs are linked to annual appraisal results and contemporary developments in the field of teaching, learning and research, which help the staff in maintaining their academic currency and support their scholarly activities.

1.1.10 Research and Scholarly Activities as a Criterion for Appraisal and Promotion

"Research and Scholarly Achievements" is one of the three criteria used in the "Annual Appraisal" of academic staff and carries a weight of 50% while teaching & learning holds 40% weightage, and the community service has 10% weightage. The staff-members with average performance in this criterion are identified for research training activities. It is also one of the three criteria used for "Academic promotion".

1.1.11 Research-teaching Nexus

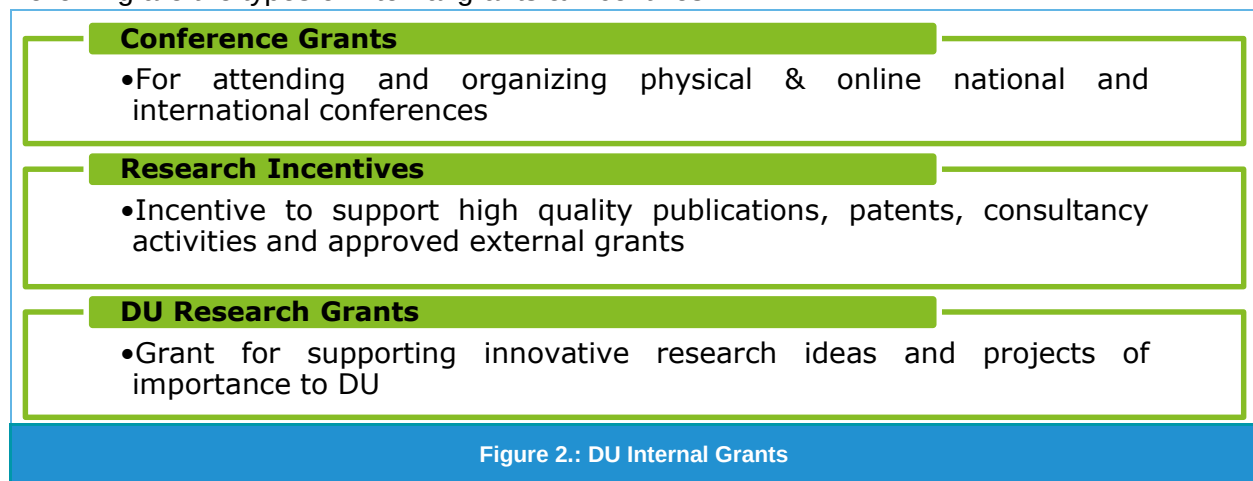
The Research Teaching Nexus provides the opportunity for faculty to integrate research in their teaching and produce successful scholarly outcomes. DU encourages staff to incorporate their research activities and the contemporary researches in the field into curricula to foster student interest in research and for understanding its benefits. This helps in motivating and encouraging more student's participation in research projects.

2. Research Grant & Incentives Guidelines

The Research & Development Guidelines will be applicable for two academic years unless review is needed. The full-time faculty members will be eligible to apply for all grants and incentives while the part-time faculty members, non-academic staff, and students will be eligible to apply for incentives for publishing papers and the incentive for securing external grants only.

Research papers, proposals, books, or book chapters with dual affiliation will not be considered for all types of grants and incentives. The faculty members (Full-time or part-time) and students can receive research incentives and grants after approval from CRC/CPSRC, the Department Chair, the Dean, URC, the Department of Research, and the DVC/VC. The non-academic staff can receive research incentives after approval from the concerned supervising authority, URC, the Department of Research, and the DVC/VC.

Following are the types of internal grants & incentives:



Details and guidelines related to each of these funding schemes and incentives are as follows:

2.1 Conference Grant (CG)

The faculty members at Dhofar University can apply for three types of conference grants: Traditional Conference Grant (TCG) (In person attendance), Online Conference Grant (OCG) and the Conference Attendance Grant for Invited Keynote Speaker (KCG). Moreover, to promote research culture at DU, the Department of Research also offers the Grant for Organizing Conferences (ORCG) to Colleges/CPS/Research Centres.

2.1.1 Traditional Conference Grant

The TCG is awarded to the faculty members who intend to present their research work in national and international conferences. The faculty members can claim a maximum of 1000 R.O.

2.1.1.1 Conditions for TCG application

The faculty members seeking to apply for TCG must fulfill the following conditions:

- Applicants should have completed one year of service at DU.
- The part-time faculty members, non-academic staff, and students are not eligible for TCGs.
- Faculty who apply to attend a conference without presenting a paper will not be funded. For multi-author publications, only one TCG will be granted to one of the authors.

- d. The funding period will be for a full year i.e. September–August. The conferences held during the examination or registration period will be funded based on the department chairperson and college dean's approval.
- e. Only those TCG applications will be considered where the conference is organized by internationally or nationally recognized societies (as per its discipline) or top 1000 Universities (as per the QS ranking). In addition, for faculty teaching in Arabic only, TCG applications will be considered where the conference is organized by top 200 Arab University (as per the QS Arab world ranking). Moreover, the conference organized by TCG will also be considered for conferences held within Oman regardless of QS ranking.
- f. Additionally, the faculty may select a conference from the list of acceptable conferences (or acceptable internationally recognized societies) prepared by each college as per their specific disciplines and approved by CRC and URC.
- g. The conference should not be multidisciplinary in nature and the same conference should not be organized more than twice a year.
- h. The technical committee should be composed of members from different international Universities if the conference is organized by an internationally recognized society only.
- i. International conferences are those held outside Oman while national conferences are those held inside Oman.
- j. The similarity index for the conference paper should be as per the guidelines of academic integrity policy.
- k. Applicant should have at least one publication indexed in Scopus or Web of Science, DU list A (for faculty teaching in Arabic only) or published in any peer reviewed journal (for CPS faculty only) since last funded TCG (if applicable).
- l. Applicant home country conference will not be funded during summer vacation.
- m. Applicants should clearly state whether they have received, are receiving, or will apply for funds from another external source.
- n. The paper should represent original research that contributes to advancing the knowledge of the research field of the applicant with DU affiliation only even if applicant have an external fund.
- o. Applicants will receive TCG once in two academic years.
- p. The Grant covers per diem, registration fee, and economy class air ticket. The total cost should not exceed the budget cap of the conference grants for all mentioned expenses. The total cost of the registration fee and economy class air ticket should not exceed 500 R.O.
- q. For international conferences, the total per diem will be awarded according to the duration of the conference (100 R.O per day) in addition to the two days of travel. In all cases, the total per diem allowance should not exceed 500 R.O.
- r. For national conferences, the total per diem will be awarded for the duration of the conference (80 R.O. per day) only. In all cases, the total per diem allowance should not exceed 400 R.O.
- s. The duration of a TCG for an international conference should not exceed five calendar days i.e., leave starting one day before and ending one day after the event irrespective if it falls over the weekend or the weekday. The Dean has the right to grant additional days of paid leave if necessary. For national conferences, the leave will be granted only for the duration of the conference.
- t. Applicant should present his approved research work for CG at the departmental or College level. The CRC/CPSRC in each College/CPS should be responsible for organizing the presentations.
- u. The applicant shall submit the class schedule for missed classes during the conference leave.
- v. From each college, only one TCG will be granted to a faculty member for the same conference. In case the faculty member is applying using the external funded grant to cover

the conference cost, only one additional faculty member will be allowed to attend the same conference.

- w. The cap for all conference grant applications will be 25,000, R.O. If a specific College/CPS will utilize 5,000 R.O., no more applications will be entertained from that College/CPS until 30th April. The applications may be processed after April depending on the availability of budget and underutilization of budget from any other College/CPS.
- x. For conferences held in July and August, the applicant shall clear all advances at most by the end of June.

2.1.2 Online Conference Grant (OCG)

Taking into consideration the prevalence of COVID-19 pandemic around the globe in 2020, numerous precautionary measures were taken by many countries including closure or restricted air travel. In view of the same, various international societies and universities had resorted to online conferences to continue with the research initiative of academics across the world. This initiative will help support our faculty to continue their research activities by attending such scientific forums by exchanging research experiences and building research networks.

2.1.2.1 Conditions for OCG application

The conditions to apply for OCG are similar to TCG with the following exceptions:

- a) The Grant will cover the registration fee only to a maximum limit of 200 R.O.
- b) Faculty in the academic rank of lecturer shall be given preference in funding.
- c) Only those OCG applications will be considered where the conference is organized by internationally recognized societies (as per its discipline) or top 1000 Universities (as per the QS ranking). For faculty teaching in Arabic only, OCG applications will be considered where the conference is organized by any Arab University ranked in QS Arab World Ranking.
- d) The conference should not be multidisciplinary in nature and should not be organized more than 2 times a year.
- e) Applicants will be eligible to receive OCG twice per academic year, once in each semester, subject to availability of funds.
- f) From each college, two faculty members can participate in the same conference.

2.1.3 Procedure for application for a TCG and OCG

The application for a TCG/OCG will pass through different stages of evaluation. Below are the several steps to be taken from the submission of a paper to a conference until the final decision by the DVC/VC.

- a. Submit your paper to a conference. The event should be for professionals in the respective field of specialization of the presenter or closely related field. The submission cycle will start from September 1st and ends on 31st May of each academic year as per the University academic calendar.
- b. Once you have received a notification that your paper is accepted for presentation, fill out the TCG/OCG application form downloadable from DU website.
- c. Ensure that you have attached all necessary attachments as mentioned on the TCG/OCG application form before submission.
- d. Submit the complete TCG/OCG application through Research Management System with the required documents to your Department Chair.
- e. The Chair will forward the approved application within two days of submission to the College Research Committee (CRC) Chair.

- f. The CRC chair will forward the approved applications to the respective College Dean within two weeks of receiving the application.
- g. Applications rejected by the CRC should not be sent to DR. The CRC Chair is responsible to inform the applicant regarding the rejection of application officially.
- h. After the approval of the Dean, the Dean's office shall send the application to the University Research Committee Chair within two days of receiving it from CRC.
- i. After evaluating the application, the decision of the URC shall be communicated to DR within two weeks from the date of receipt from DR.
- j. DR after approval will forward the applications to DVC/VC within two days of receiving the decision from URC for final approval. Simultaneously, DR will notify regarding rejection of application to the concerned applicant.
- k. After approval of DVC/VC, DR will notify the applicant regarding the approval of the application.
- l. Applications must be received by the DR at least three weeks prior to the date of event and by the DVC at least one week prior to the date of activity.
- m. As soon as the applicant receives the official approval, he/she must apply for research leave. The applicant should then give a copy of his/her grant approval and the Special Leave form to the chair of his/her department, to be forwarded to the dean and then to the Human Resources. The HR will process the application based on the notification by the DR. The applicant should also send a copy of the Leave form, a copy of the letter of approval he/she received and the CG approval to the Department of Finance.
- n. The applicant should clear all advances within two weeks after the date of the conference by providing the receipts for the registration fee, and ticket to the Department of Finance. For OCG only the receipt for the registration fee will be required. Failure to do so will result in the full amount being deducted from the applicant's salary for the next commencing month.
- o. For conferences held in July and August, the applicant shall clear all advances at most by the end of June.
- p. For conferences under external funded grant, the application after approval of URC shall be forwarded to the Research focal point who after approval shall forward it to Department of finance for further processing.

2.1.4 Conference Attendance Grant for Invited Keynote Speaker (KCG)

The faculty members who are invited as keynote speaker in prestigious conferences due to their research expertise and reputation to present research paper will be provided ticket to attend the conference provided the conference organizers are not facilitating travel. The faculty member has to submit proof of payment of airline ticket to the Department of Finance upon return.

2.1.5 Grant for Organizing Conference (ORCG)

Academic events are essential for fostering research and knowledge exchange across academic institutions. One of the objective of DR and URC is to encourage a research culture at university through such events. To assist, the DR grants 1500 R.O. as ORCG to Colleges/CPS/Research Centers for one conference per year. The grant is intended to create a conducive environment of research knowledge-sharing between the researchers as well as to establish linkages and research networks with relevant organizations and industrial sectors. The complete application including details of conference as per template, application form and necessary required documents must be submitted to CRC/CPSRC. The approved application will then follow the similar procedure as TCG/OCG Clause 2.1.3(f-i). For Research centres, the application should be forwarded directly to DR after approval of the respective Director of Research Centre. The application must be submitted atleast four months before the conference.

2.1.6 Availing and Claiming Conference Grants

During the academic year, faculty members cannot avail both types of conference grants (TCG & OCG). Once the OCG grant is approved and availed, it will automatically make the applicant ineligible for the TCG grant. Both OCG and TCG grants shall be subject to the availability of the research budget and the last date could be preponed or extended based on the budget availability. DR shall send out an intimation about the same to all academic in DU. It is possible that the applicant receives the funds before he/she travels if, along with the Leave form and the TCG approval, the applicant submits:

- a) Proof of payment of registration fee
- b) Proof of payment of airline ticket

In either case (receiving payment before or after the event), it is the applicant's responsibility to call/e-mail/follow up with the Department of Finance to receive his/her payment.

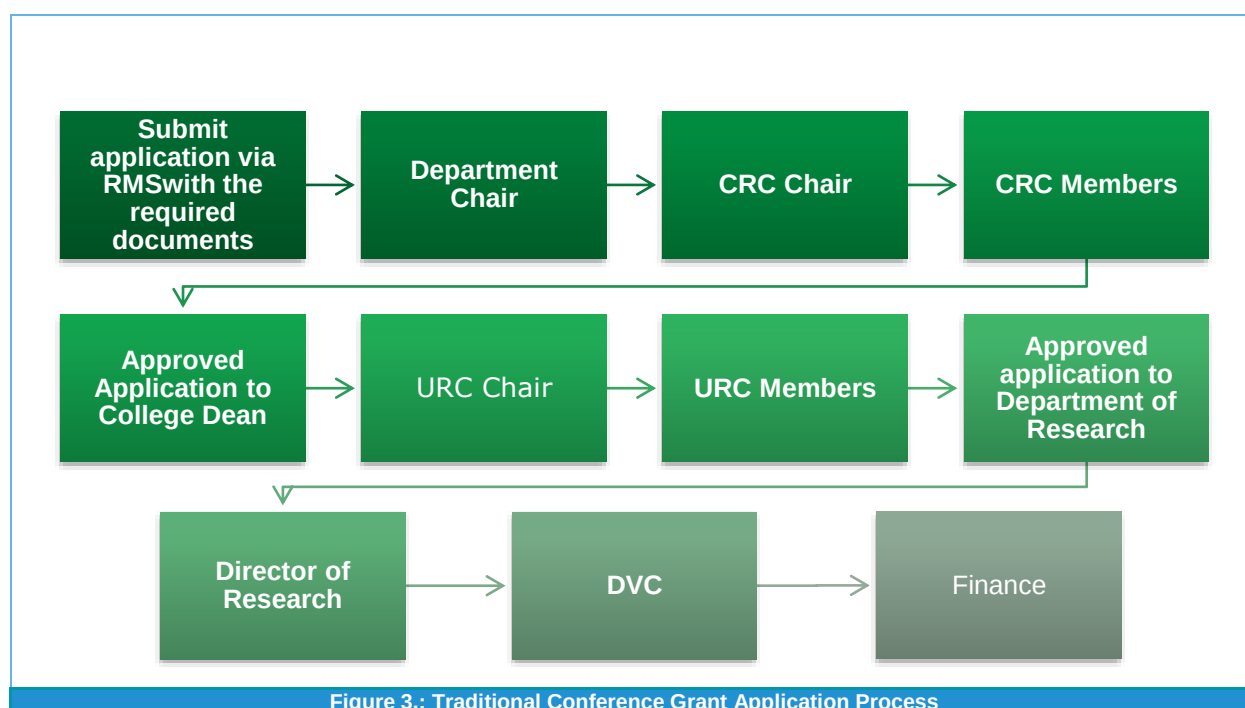


Figure 3.: Traditional Conference Grant Application Process

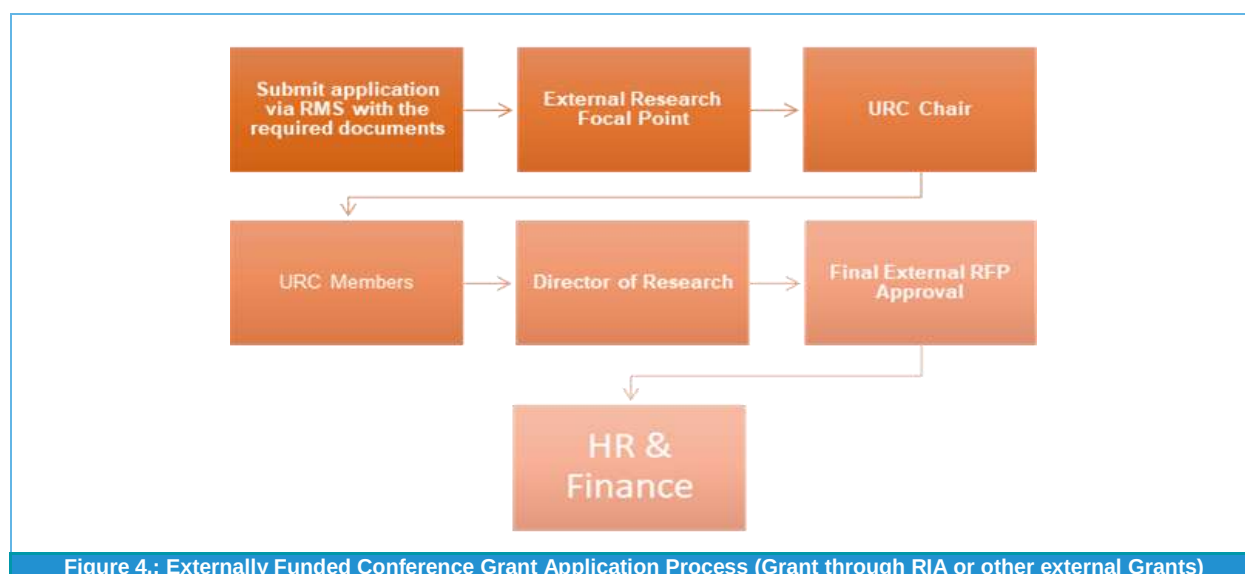


Figure 4.: Externally Funded Conference Grant Application Process (Grant through RIA or other external Grants)

2.2 Dhofar University Research Grant (DURG)

Dhofar University Research Grant (DURG) is intended to support the academic research work of the DU faculty that is expected to yield innovative results or findings consistent with the university research and educational objectives. DURG are awarded to support collaborative/group research projects. The project budget should not exceed 1500 R.O. The number of funded projects will depend on the total allocated budget for DURG each year, however, it is expected that each College and CPS succeeds in getting from one to two grants.

2.2.1 Conditions for a DURG application

- a) Only group/collaborative proposal applications are accepted.
- b) The Research team should include a Principal Investigator (PI) and a Co-Principal Investigator. The Co-Investigators can be added If deemed necessary. The PI and Co-PI should be from DU, however, the Co-investigators can be from any collaborative international or national organization or HEI.
- c) The PI shall be PhD holder whereas the Co-PI can be Master holder with exception of CPS where Master holders can apply as PI.
- d) In case of collaborative research project with external organizations/HEIs, the funds can be utilized by the DU faculty only for travel within Oman.
- e) The faculty member should have completed one semester at DU if he/she wishes to apply for the DURG.
- f) Funding is for one academic year only and the funding period will start from 1st January to 31st December each year.
- g) The research topic should have relevance to DU, related to an area of concern for DU or from the specified research groups.
- h) Funding for the grants is competitive.
- i) The applications will be evaluated based on three criteria i.e.
 - Research Excellence (40%)
 - Expected Impact for DU (40%)
 - Research profile (20%)

The evaluation done by CRC/CPSRC will have a 35% weightage of the total score, whereas the evaluation by URC will have a weightage of 25%, and the evaluation by atleast two external reviewers will have a weightage of 40% of the total score.

at least two external reviewers will have a Weightage of 40% of the total score.			
No.	Evaluation by	Criteria	Weightage
1.	CRC/CPSRC	Research Excellence (40%) Expected Impact (40%) Research Profile (20%)	35%
2.	URC		25%
3.	External Reviewer		40%
Total Score			100

- j) The research excellence criteria evaluation will be consisted of, but not limited to:
 - Novelty and originality of the research objectives
 - Research significance
 - Clarity of the proposal
 - Literature and/or patent reviews (where appropriate)
 - Methodology
 - Benefit to Oman and DU
 - Budget allocated
 - Prior research publications related to the proposal (if any)

whereas the expected impact will be evaluated based on, but not limited to:

- Capacity building e.g., Involvement of DU students

- Selection of Research topic if it addresses the current DU challenges
- Collaboration with other national/international institutions with aim to develop research networks
- Number of expected publications that are going to result from the submitted proposals with an aim to publish in Scopus or Web of Science
- Expected number of Intellectual Properties (IPs)

Similarly, the research profile of the research team will be evaluated based on, but not limited to:

- No. of Publications in Scopus/Web of science or DU list of RAJ-A in last 5 years
 - RG Score
 - No. of citations
 - No. of RIA approved project
- k) The CRC/CPSRC/URC must include written justification for its decisions about each application.
 - l) Grants will not be extended from one fiscal year to the next. Failure to use grants in a timely manner may jeopardize eligibility for new DURG grants.
 - m) An applicant could be given a semester extension by the Department of Research (upon URC's recommendation) in a special case (to complete the outcomes of the project).
 - n) A final report shall be submitted by the project awardees to the Department of Research along with Turnitin similarity and AI report within two weeks of the completion of the project.
 - o) The final reports will be forwarded to URC for evaluation.
 - p) The successful DURG recipient will also have to deliver a presentation (at college level) and participate in DU Annual Research Day (as an oral or poster presenter).
 - q) The PI should submit all requests related to the management of grant as per the clauses mentioned in the Section 3 of the University's 'Guidelines of Approved Projects'.
 - r) Movement of budget between the categories is allowed (if justified).
 - s) All property (equipment, materials etc.) must be returned back to DR after project completion.
 - t) Electronic items including laptops and hard disks cannot be requested in the project budget.
 - u) The PI can use the budget under travel category for visiting other institutions to use the laboratories and the computational facilities. The travel should not affect his/her teaching responsibilities.
 - v) Members cannot be added or removed from an internally funded project except in exceptional Justified cases.
 - w) An applicant, if he is PI, may not apply for more than one project.
 - x) DU students involved in the project can receive a stipend of 20% of approved budget (in accordance with RIA guidelines) i.e., 3 R.O./hr for an Undergraduate RA and 5 R.O./hr for a Graduate RA provided it is included in budget details of the submitted proposal.
 - y) The process of hiring an RA is similar to the hiring process for RIA approved grants (please refer to the Document "Guidelines for approved projects, Section3.0" downloadable from DU website).

2.2.2 Procedure for application for a DURG

The Research team willing to apply for DURG should follow the following procedure:

- a) The application must be submitted by the PI.
- b) Prepare a research proposal following the outlines (given in Section 2.2.3).
- c) Fill out the DURG application form downloadable from the DU website.

- d) Submit the application (DURG proposal form, quotation of items requested, Turnitin report and the publication details related to the project, CV of research team) through RMS to the department Chairperson not later than the specified deadline for that academic year.
- e) The CRC/CPSRC of his/her respective college/CPS will normally evaluate the group application. However, CRC/CPSRC may seek help from other colleges/external experts if required.
- f) The department chairperson after approval shall forward the application to the CRC/CPSRC Chair of their respective Colleges within two days of receiving it from the applicant.
- g) The committee after receiving all applications shall evaluate them based on the above defined criteria. In the case of collaborative projects, CRC/CPSRC may occasionally seek evaluations from other colleges/external experts.
- h) The applications along with committee recommendations and score (out of 100) will then be forwarded to the College Dean by the CRC Chair within two weeks of receipt of the applications.
- i) The Dean after approval will forward the applications to the DR within two days of receiving the applications.
- j) The DR shall receive applications from all Colleges/CPS not later than three weeks of submission of applications by the applicant.
- k) DR will forward the applications along with the committee score and recommendations to URC Chair not later than two days from the date of receipt from College Dean.
- l) The URC will evaluate the applications based on the above defined criteria and be given a score (out of 100).
- m) The URC Chair shall return the applications along with their scores and recommendations to the DR within two weeks from the date of receipt of applications.
- n) The applications will then finally be evaluated by the DR and will be ranked on proposal ranking form. DR will forward the final ranking to DVC/VC for final approval within ten days after receiving it from the URC chair.
- o) The DR will announce the results after approval by the DVC/VC.
- p) The research team after accomplishing the project outcomes would be awarded an appreciation certificate on annual research day.

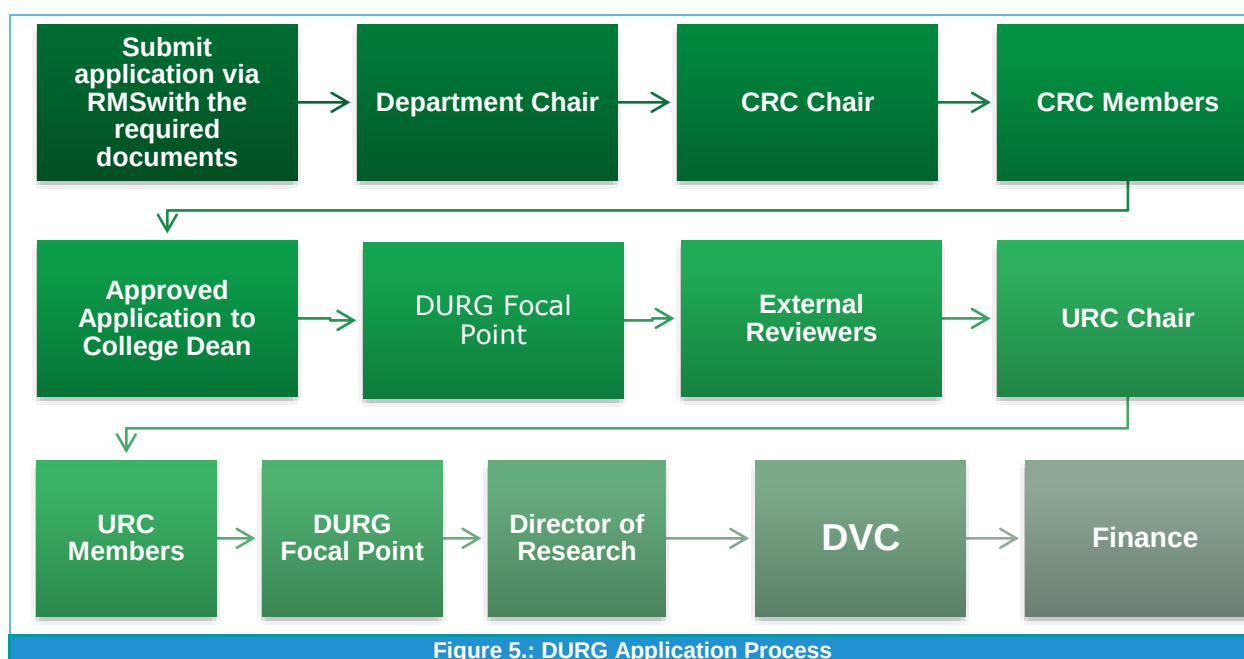


Figure 5.: DURG Application Process

2.2.3 Outline of the Research Proposals for DURG

The proposal must include the following:

- Title of the project
- Summary of proposed work/graphical abstract if applicable
- Introduction and objectives
- Significance of the project
- Benefits to Oman and DU
- Methodology
- Outline of the proposed activity Itemized budget in R.O
- Deliverables i.e., details of key outcomes, KPI, capacity building, expected publications
- References

2.2.4 Support Materials Required

- (a) List of last 5 years' publications related to the project. (The applicant can attach previous publications in case he/she did not publish in last 5 years.)
- (b) If applicable, a list of publications that have resulted from the previous DURG /RIA grant.
- (c) A pdf copy of Turnitin report of the submitted proposal as per the academic integrity policy guidelines.

2.3 Research Incentives (RI)

DU strongly believes that researchers should be rewarded for their research productivity. Following are different type of incentives:

2.3.1 Incentives for Publishing Papers (IPP):

The faculty members (Part-time or Full-time), non-academic staff, Research centre staff and students who publish a paper in a journal indexed in Web of Science (with or without impact factor), Scopus or DU list A of Refereed Arabic Journals (RAJ-A) during the academic year will be eligible for a monetary incentive for each paper (subject to budget availability). The following conditions apply for RI claims:

2.3.1.1 Conditions for an IPP application

- a) The paper should be published with DU affiliation only. Dual affiliation will not be accepted.
- b) For the faculty members teaching on the programs delivered fully in Arabic Language in the Departments of Law, Education, Social Science, Arabic Language and Literature, Management, and Accounting can only claim for incentives for publications in the journals included in DU List of RAJ-A.
- c) There are TWO LISTS of Refereed Arabic Journals acceptable to DU for publication:
 - DU List A of Refereed Arabic Journals (RAJ-A): The List A contains journals recognized by DU as equivalent to publications in Scopus or Web of Science (without IF).
 - DU List B of Refereed Arabic Journals (RAJ-B): The List B contains journals recognized by DU as equivalent to Peer Reviewed Journals acceptable for AFAR only. Any other journal not in the list will not be considered as PRJ publication.
- d) Part-time faculty members, non-academic staff, and students are eligible for incentives for publishing paper subject to the following conditions:
 - Paper is published with Dhofar University's affiliation only.
 - Paper is published during the job tenure/study period.
- e) If the paper has been published in Scopus, the applicant should ensure that his publication is appearing in "Scopus author preview" (<https://www.scopus.com/freelookup/form/author.uri>) prior to applying for RI. If the paper

is indexed in Web of Science, the journal should appear in the Master Journal List for Web of Science only (<https://mjl.clarivate.com/home>). For Arabic journals, the journal should appear in DU List of RAJ-A.

- f) A copy of the paper, the clear evidence of quartiles (Q1, Q2, Q3 or Q4, <https://www.scopus.com/sources>), the clear evidence of impact factor and that the paper has been indexed in Scopus, Web of Science or DU list A of RAJ must be presented along with the application.
- g) Papers published online having volume and issue number will be considered.
- h) A faculty member claiming for an incentive for a paper, cannot use the same paper to fulfill the mandatory requirement as per AFAR.
- i) Papers published in hijacked journals, blacklisted journals, and predatory journals shall not be considered for incentives.
- j) The applicant should deliver a research seminar after getting incentive at the college or department level. The CRC/CPSRC in each College/CPS should be responsible for organizing the presentations.
- k) The students undertaking Final Year Projects and Master Thesis are required to be active researchers under the supervision of the faculty assigned to them. The supervisors are encouraged to jointly publish the findings coming from such research projects and theses. In order to recognize the student's research, the faculty or student can claim for incentives provided student paper is driven from Master thesis or Final Year Project and DU student should be the first author.
- l) In the case of multiple authors from DU, only one author can apply for incentive.
- m) The cap for incentive applications is 2000 R.O. per applicant in an academic year. The cap does not include the incentive for external grants.
- n) The applicant can claim incentives for papers published during the current or last academic year.
- o) The incentives shall be claimed as per the following conditions and the amount mentioned in Table 1:
 - 100% of the incentive amount will be given if the paper is published as a first author or single author.
 - 70% of the incentive amount will be given if the DU author is not listed as the first author and the total number of authors is less than or equal to 5 authors irrespective of authorship.
 - 50% of the incentive amount will be given if the DU author is not listed as the first author and the total number of authors is more than five authors irrespective of authorship.
 - For papers published in Nature or Science, 100% of the incentive amount will be given irrespective of authorship.
 - For publications in journals indexed by Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) or Chartered Association of Business Schools (ABS) will be considered only if the application fulfills the criteria for IPP application.

Table 1

Incentives for Publishing Paper (R.O.)										
Nature or Science	Scopus with Web of Science Impact Factor				Scopus without Web of Science Impact Factor				Web of Science only or Scopus without Quartile	DU List A of Arabic Journals
500	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	75	75
	350	300	250	200	250	200	150	100		

Category	Link	Description
Nature or Science	Nature: https://www.nature.com/ Science: https://www.science.org/journal/science	Research paper published in Nature or Science
Scopus with Web of Science Impact Factor	Scopus: https://www.scopus.com/sources Web of Science: https://www.webofscience.com/wos/woscc/basic-search	Research paper published in journal indexed in Scopus and classified as per quartiles (Q1, Q2, Q3 or Q4) with Impact Factor in Web of Science
Scopus without Web of Science Impact Factor		Research paper published in journal indexed in Scopus and classified as per quartiles (Q1, Q2, Q3 or Q4) without Impact Factor in Web of Science
Web of Science only or Scopus without Quartile		Research paper published in journal indexed in Web of Science only or in a journal indexed in Scopus without quartile
DU List A of Arabic Journals	https://www.du.edu.om/download-research-information/	Paper published in DU approved list A of Arabic journals only

2.3.1.2 Procedure for a IPP application

- The applicants after receiving official notification regarding their research work being published in respective journals indexed in Web of Science, Scopus or DU list of RAJ-A shall submit the application for incentive through RMS. The applicant should compile all evidences as required in RMS for e.g. (evidence of indexing, impact factor, quartile, publication date etc)
- Last date for submission of applications will be 31st May of each AY, however, the deadline might be extended depending on budget availability.
- The complete application should then be submitted to the College Research Committee(CRC) Chair.
- In case of non-academic staff/Staff from Research Centre or students, the application must be sent to the relevant CRC/CPSRC Chair as per area of publishing by the applicant.
- The CRC/CPSRC Chair shall forward the application along with his recommendation to the DR within three days from the date of receipt of application.
- The DR after approval will forward the application to DVC/VC for final approval within five days of receiving the recommendations of CRC/CPSRC Chair.
- After all necessary approvals, the DR will send a letter of approval to the applicant through RMS. Simultaneously, DR will notify the applicant regarding rejection of their application through RMS.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to call/e-mail/follow up with the Department of Finance to receive his/her payment.

2.3.2 Incentives for Book and Book Chapter (IBB)

Similar to IPP, DU recognizes the importance of publication of book and book chapters and believes that faculty members should be rewarded for publishing them. The incentive application for book and book chapter shall meet the following conditions:

2.3.2.1 Conditions for an IBB application

- A book/book chapter should be indexed in Scopus or Web of Science with DU affiliation
- The book must be published and assigned an ISBN number.
- Applicant having more than one chapter in the same book can claim for a maximum of two chapters.

- d) The first few pages of book; where details of authors, publishers, ISBN numbers, publication year etc. are mentioned, should be attached to the application.
- e) The faculty should claim the incentive for book or book chapter as per Table 2 and Table 3 respectively.
- f) Faculty should give a research seminar after getting incentive for Book or Book Chapter at the college or department level. The CRC/CPSRC in each college/CPS should be responsible for organizing the presentations.

Table 2

Indexed in Scopus or Web of Science
500

Table 3

Book Chapter (National or International)	
Authorship	Indexed in Scopus/Web of Science/Verified Arabic Publishers
First Author	75
Second Author and onwards	50

2.3.2.2 Procedure for an IBB application

The procedure to apply for an IBB application is similar to that of an IPP application with following exceptions:

- a) The applicants after receiving official notification regarding their book/book chapter being published with DU affiliation only by nationally or internationally recognized publisher verified by CRC/CPSRC/URC or indexed in Scopus or Web of Science (with or without impact factor) can apply for incentive through RMS.

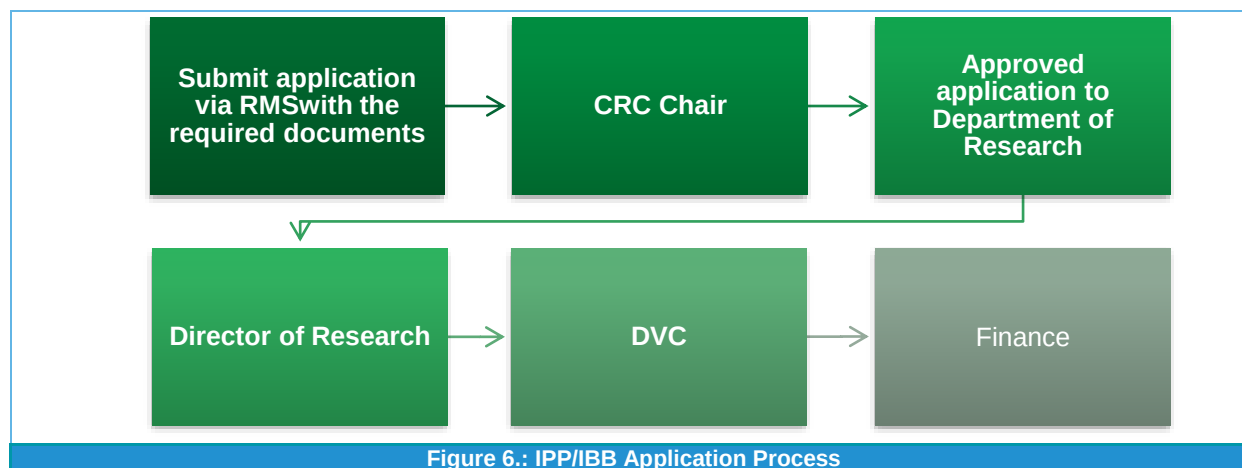


Figure 6.: IPP/IBB Application Process

2.3.3 Incentives for Patents

A faculty in whose name a patent is registered (either nationally or internationally) while in the service of the University and with University affiliation shall be eligible for a cash reward of R.O. 500 and a Letter of Appreciation to be awarded on Annual research day on fulfilling following conditions:

- a) The faculty member shall seek pre-approval from the Department of Research before filing any patent application (National/International).
- b) The ownership of the patent shall belong to Dhofar University completely or partially as per mutual agreement signed between DU and the researcher before submitting the patent application.

- c) The Department of Research has right to accept or reject the patent pre-approval request for the benefit of the University.

2.3.4 Incentive for Researchers having approved External Grant

The full-time faculty members, non-academic staff and students can claim for incentive for securing external grant as per following conditions:

- The research team shall be eligible for an incentive of 15% of the total amount spent by the research team from the approved budget of externally funded research grant project.
- The incentive shall be given to the whole research team for any funded project (RG, GRG, URG, etc.) granted by any external funding body (RIA, MoH, etc).
- The Principal Investigator (PI)/Faculty mentor shall request for the incentive after the project has been completed and the audit and final reports are submitted and approved by the respective funding body.
- The PI shall be responsible to divide the amount among the team members.

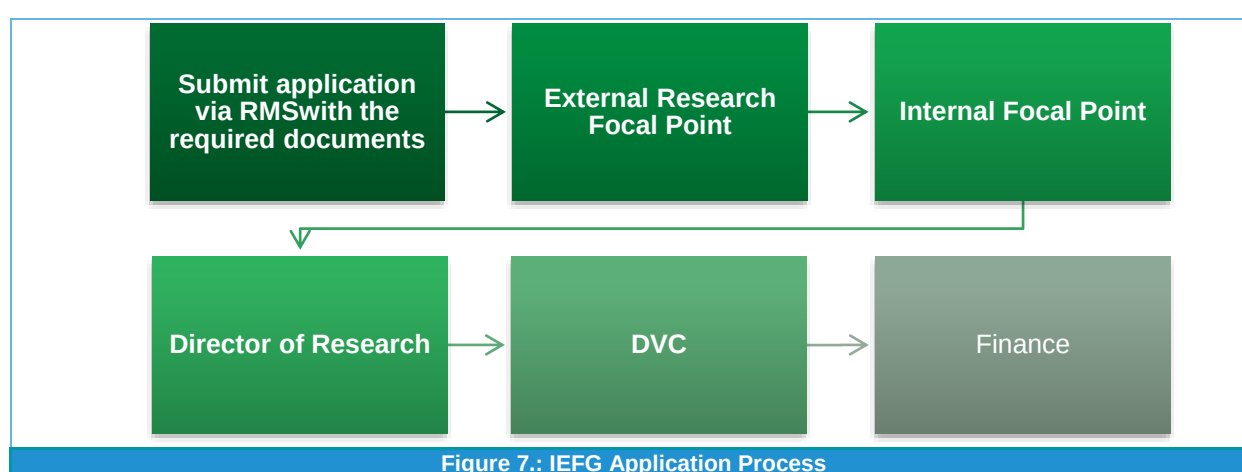


Figure 7.: IEFG Application Process

2.3.5 Incentive for Engaging in Consultancy Activity

A faculty engaged in Consultancy Activity while in the service of the University (R.O. 2,000 and above) and with University affiliation shall be eligible for a cash reward of R.O. 300 and a Letter of Appreciation to be awarded on Annual research day.

2.3.6 List of Journals Not Accepted in DU

With the intent of ensuring quality publications by DU faculty members, the Department of Research, through URC, shall publish a list of journals NOT accepted by DU by 30th June each year (Beall's List). This list shall be applicable for the entire ensuing academic year. If any faculty member published a research paper in any journal mentioned in the list, **it will not be** considered as publications acceptable to DU. Additionally, such faculty may be subject to disciplinary action as per Academic Integrity Policy and DU Bylaws. The journals are categorized into three main categories:

- Blacklisted Journals List
- Predatory Journals List
- Hijacked Journals List

However, if a journal is appearing in the above blacklisted journal list or predatory list but is also indexed in Scopus or Web of Science database, then in that case DU will accept the publications in that journal.

However, if the journal is in hijacked journal list it will NOT be accepted under any circumstances. The list shall be revised, updated and circulated by 30 June of each academic year and will be applicable from 1st September up till 31st August of each academic year. Similarly, the Arabic List A and B of refereed Arabic journals shall be revised each year and published by 30th June of the year and will be applicable from 1st September up till 31st August of each academic year.

2.4 Procedure to Apply for Research Leave

- a) The faculty member who wish to attend the Conferences or any other research event approved by College Dean on self-finance basis (without requesting grant) should submit the request for Research leave through Research Management System along with the supporting documents (research paper, conference details and acceptance letter) to the Department Chair.
- b) The Chair after reviewing the request shall forward the approved application to the College Dean within two days of receiving it from the applicant.
- c) The Dean after approving shall forward the approved application to DR.
- d) The DR will prepare the approval letter and will send it to the faculty member. The DR shall also notify the HR department regarding the approval.

2.5 Procedure for Approval of Distribution of Internal/External Questionnaire

2.5.1 Questionnaire for Internal/External Distribution by DU Students

- a) The questionnaire for internal/external distribution by Undergraduate students will require the approval of the Project supervisor and the Department Chair.
- b) The Post Graduate questionnaires prepared mainly by Master students will require approval of the supervisor and the Postgraduate Research Committee of the respective College.

2.5.2 Questionnaire for Internal/External Distribution by Faculty Members

- a) The faculty members at DU should submit the request for distribution of questionnaire to DR through Research Management System. The applicant should attach the ethics approval form, the e-questionnaire or interview questions with his application.
- b) DR will forward the questionnaires to the Chair of University Research Ethics & Biosafety Committee for evaluation within two days from the date of receipt.
- c) The Chair shall return the approved questionnaire along with the recommendations (if any) to DR within one week from the date of receiving the application.
- d) The applicant shall receive an approval letter from the DR for distribution.
- e) The e-questionnaires can be circulated upon applicants' request, however, the request for circulating the hard copy will not be entertained.

2.5.3 Questionnaire for Internal Distribution by External Researchers/Students

The procedure for processing the request for distribution of questionnaires received from researchers/students outside DU is similar to section 2.5.2. The approved e-questionnaires from the external researchers/students shall be circulated by DR to the required stakeholders. The faculty members should ensure that the e-questionnaires circulated by DR are filled as per the deadline. The faculty members should also facilitate the distribution process among students if required.

Contact Us at:

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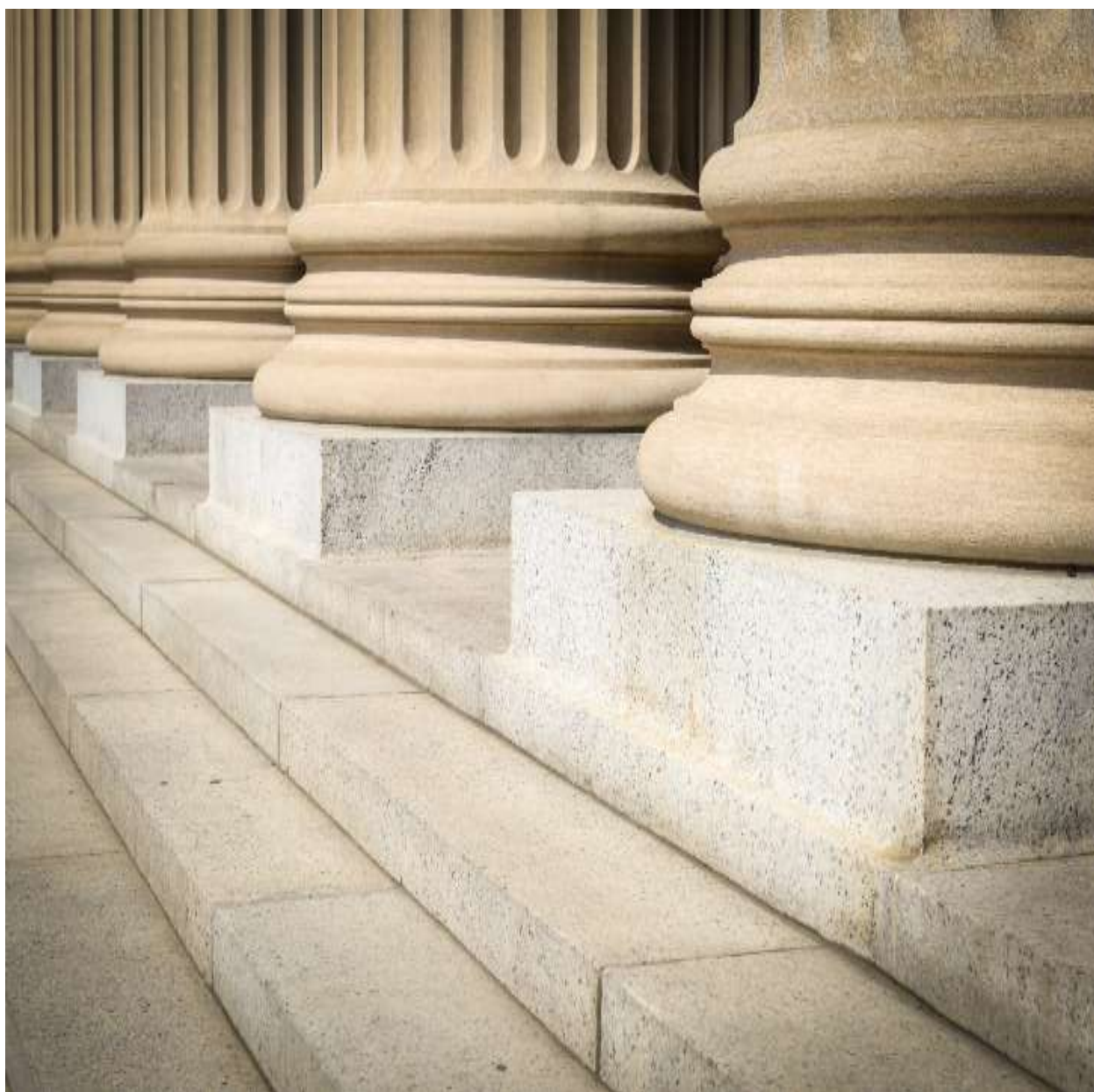
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