

INTERNAL FUNDING SCHEMES & ACIAR/PASS GRANTS

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Prepared by: Research Office

Approving Authority: PVCR&I

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Internal Funding Schemes & ACIAR/PASS scholarship Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to provide the procedures on how the Research Office (RO) in partnership with the academic colleges implements and manages the internal research funding projects & ACIAR/PASS scholarships.

2.0 Internal Research Funding Schemes

RO administrates and manages four funding schemes. These are;

- a) Seed Funding Scheme - \$15,000.
 - Applications are open for two weeks in February, May, August and November.
- b) Research Preparatory Funding Scheme - \$1,000.
 - Applications are open for one week in the last week of January, March, May, July, September and November.
- c) Industry Collaborative Funding Scheme - \$25,000.
 - Applications are open for the first three weeks of March, June and September for FNU academics to apply in collaboration with industries. Applications coming from the industry will be considered any time of the year
- d) International Visiting Fellowship Scheme - \$10,000.
 - Applications are open for one month period in April and October.

The details and guidelines for each funding scheme are available on the FNU Research Website.

2.1 Procedure

- a) Each funding scheme has an application form. Researchers shall fill in the appropriate form when applying for the funding. All requirements as part of the application should be submitted with the application form.
- b) All RO funding applications for *academics* shall be vetted at the College level and approved by the Associate Dean Research (ADR) and the College Dean before they are submitted to the Grants and Ethics Officer (GEO) at RO. Incomplete application will be returned to the College ADRs.
- c) All seed funding applications for qualifying *HDR students* shall be vetted by the college ADRs and approved by the college Deans before submitting it to GEO for processing. Principal supervisors are to be the main applicants for seed grants for all qualifying (after candidature confirmation) HDR students.
- d) The approved funding applications are to be submitted with the animal/human research ethics approval letter (where applicable) to the GEO. A clear justification is to be made where animal/human research ethics is not required.
- e) The GEO shall check the funding applications against the funding scheme requirements and request additional information/documents where required. GEO may require necessary amendments based on grant guidelines/ requirements.
- f) The final application will be submitted to the PVCR&I for approval for its submission to the University Research Committee (URC) members for assessment and approval.
- g) The URC members are given a maximum of ten (10) working days to assess the applications and send their assessments and approvals to the GEO.
- h) Based on the URC members' assessment, the applications are either:
 - Funded; or
 - Requested for amendments by the applicants. The amended application (where required) will be sent back to the URC members for their comments and approval.
- i) For all approved funding applications, a Grant Approval Letter together with **Creation/Extension of Project form** will be sent to the research team. The research team members shall sign the agreement accepting the budget, ethics and policy requirements.
- j) The signed Grant Approval Letter together with **Creation/Extension of Project form** will then be returned to the GEO, who will submit it to the Manager Accounting to create Grant Code to fund the approved research project.

- k) The GEO will submit the Grant Code to the project team members and respective College ADRs. The ADRs will be responsible for processing IROs, accountable advance, acquittals and **recruitment of research assistants** (where applicable). The ADRs will liaise directly with finance for all IRO and accountable advance related matters and HR for research assistants' contracts.
- l) Principal Investigator(s) for all seed funding applicants (academics & HDR) are responsible for submitting their quarterly and final reports to ADRs for endorsement. College ADRs will be responsible for submitting the endorsed *quarterly project progress reports* and project expenditures for each research project to GEO for recording.
- m) Finance to provide detailed project financial reports when requested by RO.
- n) Finance will reconcile acquittals and give clearance for the project exits.
- o) ADRs will report and approve project completion.
- p) ADRs will have to submit the equipment returned records register to RO with project completion reports.
- q) RO will provide a project completion letter once the above requirements are met.

2.1.1 Funded Project Completion Report

a) i. Seed Funded Research Project:

At the end of the seed-funded research project, the ADRs will be responsible for submitting the endorsed *Funded Project Completion Report* to the GEO with the following details;

- Reconciled expenses and acquittal as per project budget;
- A plan for journal publication (HDR students excluded);
- Plans for external funding to grow the research into a bigger project (HDR students excluded);
- Evidence of all research equipment purchased from the research funding is returned to the College ADR for use by other researchers. The ADRs are to keep an inventory of the items returned and shall be forwarded with the report to GEO

ii. Research Preparatory Funded Project:

At the end of the research preparatory funded project, the ADRs will be responsible for submitting the endorsed

Funded Project Completion Report to the GEO with the following details;

- Reconciled expenses and acquittal as per project budget with finance department; and
- Literature review and/or research proposal and/or;
- Any other relevant information pertaining to the research project.

iii. Industry Collaborative Funded Project:

At the end of the Industry Collaborative funded project, the ADRs will be responsible for submitting the endorsed

Funded Project Completion Report to the GEO with the following details;

- Reconciled expenses and acquittals of FNU & industry contributions as per project budget with finance department;
- The outcome of the project (e.g. publications, patents, evidence of impact, etc.);
- Evidence of all research equipment purchased from the research funding provided by FNU is returned to the College ADR for use by other researchers. The ADRs are to keep an inventory of the items returned and shall be forwarded with the report to GEO.

iv. International Visiting Fellowship:

At the end of the research activity, the ADRs will be responsible for submitting the endorsed *Funded Project Completion Report* to GEO with the following details:

- Reconciled expenses and acquittal as per project budget with finance department; and
 - The detailed outcome of the project and/or;
 - Any other relevant information pertaining to the research project

- b) GEO will send a *Project Completion Letter* for all successful research projects congratulating the project team on their successful completion of the project. HDR student recipients will be provided with the *Project Completion Letter* after their successful completion of the HDR programme.
- c) The GEO will advise Manager Accounting to close the project grant code. Project holders, respective College ADRs will be informed accordingly.
- d) GEO will report the details of the completed research projects to the URC members at the next URC meeting.

2.1.2 Extension in Time to Complete the Funded Project

Researchers may apply for an extension in time where they could not complete the project within the specified timeframe. Researchers must provide justification for extension in time.

- a) Where the researchers are unable to complete their seed-funded or industry collaborative funded projects on time, they are required to apply for an extension in time using the *Extension in Time for Completion of Funded Project Form*, providing a valid justification.
- b) The College ADRs/ are responsible for vetting and submitting the endorsed applications to GEO for processing.
- c) The GEO shall assess the application and get the approval of PVC&I.
- d) Upon approval, the GEO will send the *Extension in Time Letter* to the respective project holders and College ADRs (where applicable).
- e) The Manager Accounting will be advised to make necessary changes in the Banner System.
- f) GEO will report the details of the extension in the time given for each project to URC members at the next URC meeting as information.

2.2.3 Project Exit

To provide project exit letters, RO is required to carry out in-house auditing for accountability purposes. To this effect:

- a) RO will give staff exit clearance for project holders if the staff have cleared the project requirements and attained the project completion letter.
- b) In the case, if the project has an inactive status and a staff member intends to exit (for any justified reason, including exiting from the university), RO will give staff exit clearance once College Deans and ADRs have provided a replacement of the exiting project holder/s.
- c) College Deans and ADRs are responsible for notifying and attaining exit clearance from RO for project holders leaving FNU on sabbatical leave/study leave/leave without pay/termination of contracts/resignation or any other justified reasons. The Deans and ADRs are required to find a replacement Principal Investigator (PI) or Co-Investigator/s to continue with the ongoing research project/s.
- d) RO discourages project holders from abandoning their research projects. In cases where the project holders are unable to complete their projects, they are required to fill out the *Funded Project Exit Form*.
- e) ADRs are responsible for ensuring that:
 - a valid justification is provided by the project holder;
 - project holder has to reimburse all utilised funds to the Finance Cashier (where the project holder has abandoned the research project without any justification);
 - project holder has to reimburse unutilised funds where the project is exited with a justified reason that the PVC&I/DR has approved.
 - equipment has been returned to the College ADR and recorded in the equipment return register; and
 - the *funded Project Exit Form* has been vetted by the ADR and endorsed by the College Dean before submitting it to GEO for PVC&I's approval to close the research project.

- f) Upon approval of the project exit, the GEO shall request Manager Accounting to close the fund code. The exiting project holder/s and College ADR will be informed accordingly.
- g) GEO will report the details of the exited projects to the URC members at the next URC meeting as information.

3.0 ACIAR/PASS Scholarship Grants

- a) RO will manage the overall ACIAR/PASS grants. This includes:
 - Advertising of ACIAR/PASS scholarship
 - Working with the Selection Committee to assess and select the candidates as per scholarship requirements
 - Notifying applicants on the selection outcomes
 - Writing contracts and sending them to the scholarship recipients
 - Hosting meetings with ACIAR and relevant colleges (on as and when basis)
 - Providing annual reports to ACIAR in consultation with college deans & ADRs (where applicable)
 - Providing financial reports to ACIAR in consultation with the finance department
- b) All ACIAR/PASS scholarship related IROs and accountable advance to be approved and processed by the college ADRs/Deans.
- c) Finance to provide timely financial reports and budget forecasts to RO and ACIAR.

4.0 Conference Funding

- a) Applications for conference funding are open all year round.
- b) All conference funding applications for the qualifying academics and HDR students to be endorsed by the respective college Deans and ADRs. College ADRs are responsible for vetting and submitting the endorsed conference funding applications to GEO for final endorsement by PVCR&I.
- c) GEO will notify the applicant, College Deans and ADRs on the outcome.
- d) RO will be responsible for raising IROs for the successful applicant.
- e) The ADRs in consultation with primary applicant are responsible for submitting detailed financial acquittals to finance department.
- f) The ADRs in consultation with primary applicant are responsible for submitting detailed report on the outcome of the conference/s to RO.
- g) GEO will report the details of the successful conferences to the URC members at the next URC meeting as information.

5.0 Applicable Documents

- a) Research Funding Scheme Guideline
- b) Research Preparatory Funding Scheme Guideline & Application Form
- c) Seed Funding Scheme Guideline and Application Form
- d) Industry Collaborative Funding Scheme Guideline and Application Form
- e) International Visiting Fellowship Scheme Guideline & Application Form
- f) Project Progress Report Form
- g) Funded Project Exit Form
- h) Funded Project Completion Report Form
- i) Extension in Time for Completion of Funded Project Form

6.0 Revision Log

This table will be used to insert dates of the different versions made in the Process.

Version	Approver & Date of Approval	Comment
1.0	PVCR&I: 23-05-2022	Final approval by PVCR&I

7.0 Sponsor

Research Office: DR & PVCR&I

8.0 Contact Person

Research Office

Email: saleshni.k2@fnu.ac.fj

