

Guidelines for the Dhahran Techno Valley Research Collaboration Grant

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A. Introduction

A strategic goal of the university is to make a difference in the region and globally by creating new knowledge and making discoveries that provide innovative solutions to real-world problems, contributing to the national economy and to the world. To achieve this goal, the university has created a unique ecosystem for research and development spanning all required stages from basic and exploratory research to applied and collaborative research and to advanced prototyping and commercialization. The ecosystem is supported by various centers and facilities within the University and by both the science and business parks located within the University premises. In particular, the science park, called the Dhahran Techno Valley (DTV), houses a collection of local and international companies that are interested in contributing to the vision of the University towards devising innovative and creative solutions that can help build the economy and improve the well-being of the society.

To foster research collaboration with tenants of the DTV, the University has established an industrial collaboration grant, the Dhahran Techno Valley (DTV) grant. The aim of this grant is to promote basic and exploratory research in an area of interest to both KFUPM and DTV that is anticipated to lead to more applied research that could eventually result in developing innovative and novel solutions, products or processes in joint collaboration between KFUPM and DTV tenants. A major goal of this grant is to reduce the high risk associated with basic and exploratory research that is typically too high for private companies to bear by themselves, by having the university fund the project partially in its initial stages through this grant. The grant will be open to KFUPM faculty members and researchers who share research interests of the companies in the DTV. Projects under this grant must have representations as research project team members from both KFUPM and the DTV Company. The DTV Company researcher can only be a co-investigator, while the Principal Investigator must be a KFUPM Researcher. Investigator(s) from the company will act as mediators to market the idea to the company in the search for additional funds to continue further with the project. They are expected to be heavily involved in all the phases of the project including proposal writing as this will be beneficial for both the DTV Company as well as for KFUPM, ensuring full and active collaboration between these two stakeholders in the approved project. The company will provide matching funds similar to those provided by the University in terms of both cash and non-monetary in-kind resources. This grant is also expected to increase the exposure of young researchers and KFUPM students to industrial experience.

B. Objectives

The Objectives of the DTV grant are:

1. To foster research collaboration with tenants of the DTV in an area of mutual interest
2. To promote basic and exploratory research in areas of interest that would otherwise be too risky for companies to be entirely responsible for at first
3. To promote joint research and collaboration that is anticipated to evolve into larger more applied research, which can then be adopted by the industry to eventually produce solutions and products
4. To promote co-publishing of high quality papers in internationally renowned journals and the joint-filing of patents in collaboration between KFUPM and DTV researchers
5. To facilitate increased exposure of KFUPM researchers and students to industrial problems and experiences

C. Procedure & Format

1. The Principal Investigator submits the Research Proposal in the format prescribed by DSR along with the approval from the concerned DTV Company.
2. A detailed budget needs to be prepared for each project and needs to include both manpower and supplies with complete details and justifications wherever applicable.
3. The researchers will be paid as per the financial rules of the University.
4. At any given point of time, a student will be entitled for compensation only through one funded research project.

D. Industrial Support

In addition to providing matching monetary funds to projects under this grant, further support from the DTV tenant company will be sought in different forms including:

1. Access to the DTV tenant company facilities for use of equipment
2. Involvement of company representative(s) to be part of the research team.
3. SR. 400 per month stipend for students (in addition to student compensation through the project)

4. Facilitation of availability of chemicals and materials, even if they are charged to the University during the initial phase.
5. Enabling researchers to co-publish research project outcomes in internationally renowned journals, to present collaboration results in international conferences, and to share the impact of such accomplishments with the public media.

E. Review & Evaluation Process

1. The research proposal will be reviewed by a special committee. If needed the committee may see the opinion of an expert.
2. The committee tries to identify if the proposal give a clear roadmap for developing a potential technology/new product as an outcome of this project. Additionally, it looks for
 - I. Clear relationship between the project and the technology area of benefits to KFUPM
 - II. Novelty and its importance
 - III. TRL of the project outcomes
 - IV. Clarity in the role of each team member
 - V. Value and Impact of the involvement of the company in the project
 - VI. Facilities and resources available to support the proposed research
 - VII. Direct and indirect budget contribution of KFUPM and DTV company
 - VIII. Team size in proportional to the commitment and contribution from both parties
3. The proposal is discussed in the URC and is either
 - I. Recommended for immediate funding, or
 - II. Not recommend for funding
4. During the project execution phase, the 6 monthly progress report of the project will be evaluated jointly the Research Committee and the company.

F. Budget Preparation Guidelines

The following guidelines needs be taken into consideration while preparing the proposed budget for the project. The budget will be reviewed by the research office and the final itemized budget will be conveyed before the official start of the project along with the project approval memo.

S. No.	Item	Maximum Allocation (SR)	Period
1.	Project Manager (Principal Investigator)	1,200	Month
2.	Co-Investigators (Asst. Prof. and above)	1000	Month
3.	Graduate Student (Pursuing PhD)	800	Month
4.	Graduate Student (Pursuing MS)	600	Month
5.	Undergraduate Student	400	Month
6.	Technician	400	Month
7.	Secretary	1,000	Year
8.	Consultant	14,000	Year
9.	Publication Charges	13,500	Project
10.	Stationery	1,000	Year

G. General Regulations

1. The detailed budget proposed could include manpower, materials, chemicals, and equipment.
2. The budget should be restricted to a maximum of SR 200,000 (a maximum of SR 100,000 from the University along with a matching SR 100,000 from the company) with a maximum duration of 18 months. However under special consideration, the project can be extended for six more months without any additional funds.
3. Manpower budget cannot exceed SR. 50% of the total budget.
4. Under this grant at any given point of time, a faculty member will be entitled to compensation from only one project, irrespective of his role. However, this grant will not be counted for capping the involvement in the total number of projects funded by the Deanship of Research.

H. Research Project Outcomes

Projects funded through this grant are expected to result in high quality publications involving both KFUPM researchers and DTV representatives, or in the formation of a more applied research project, based on an idea that matured through this grant, that is of interest to the concerned DTV tenant in the form a client-funded (or a collaborative research) project, or in both publications and further applied projects. Other forms of IP outcomes are also possible, and should be shared by both the University and the company.

I. Acknowledgements

Proper acknowledgment of KFUPM support along with the project number in all publications and other outcomes resulting from completed funded projects whether funded by the University or outside organizations is mandatory.