



GENERAL SIR JOHN
KOTELAWALA DEFENCE
UNIVERSITY

POLICY ON
RESEARCH GRANTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (hereinafter referred as to KDU) was initially established as the “General Sir John Kotelawala Defence Academy” by the Parliamentary Act No 68 of 1981 and subsequently it was elevated to University status by the amendment Act No 27 of 1988, thereby empowering it to award Bachelors’ and Postgraduate degrees in Defence Studies. KDU is a member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (United Kingdom) and maintains necessary standards for educating and grooming Officer Cadets to meet the challenges of modern defence management. KDU is now open for civil students who wish to continue their higher studies in various disciplines.

In order to develop as a credible higher education provider in Sri Lanka, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University recognizes the need to develop and sustain, an institutional culture that promotes active engagement in research and innovation by its staff students. KDU is hoping to become one of the leading research universities in Sri Lanka and is committed to support its research activities, and improve the quality of university education through the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge generated through research. Further, the KDU is continuously investing in its research and development activities to support the sustainable development of the society and beyond. Having identified the importance of the Research activities, KDU introduced the KDU research grant scheme, which can be utilized to initiate new projects by the academic staff or can be utilized as supplementary funding for ongoing research funded by other grants.

The aim of this Research Grant Policy is to facilitate and support basic and applied research by KDU academics for socio – economic development of the University as well as Sri Lanka.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy covers the process of applying, agreeing and maintaining KDU Research Grant Scheme in order to ensure that KDU research Grant Scheme requirements are met throughout the duration of the research. This policy is applicable to all the KDU academics who seek the funding through the KDU Research Grant scheme for their research and innovation projects.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

Objectives of Research Grant Policy of KDU are to:

- a) Support the staff of KDU to execute their research and development ideas.

- b) Encourage the KDU staff to actively engage in research utilizing their knowledge to benefit the society by contributing to national development
- c) Provide assistance to supplement the financial assistance for ongoing projects.
- d) Strengthen the infrastructure facilities of laboratories by supporting the purchase of research equipment.
- e) Strengthen the profile and ranking of the University nationally and internationally.
- f) Empower and cultivate creative and innovative research at KDU.
- g) Facilitate offering research projects from various disciplines to students registering for research degrees at postgraduate level at KDU.

4.0 PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

- In considering grant applications, the KDU takes into account; the purpose of the research program and plan of study submitted, qualifications, experience and abilities of the applicants, and the facilities available.
- The grant supports finances for purchasing consumables, equipment, employing research support staff, travelling, and other expenses that are directly relevant to the research.
- Computer equipment, office equipment, furniture; dues for membership in scientific societies; office supplies including mail/postage costs; telephone, fax, or modem line costs; publication/Manuscript costs; Conference participation costs; and other costs for facilities already available at KDU are not supported by the grant.
- The Principal Investigator should have a permanent position at KDU, if on contract, the contract period should cover the duration of the project.
- The Principal Investigator (PI) should have postgraduate research qualification and publications/patents in relevant area as specified in the guidelines.
- Co-investigators should have postgraduate qualifications and research experience supported with publications/patents as specified in the guidelines.
- Those who wish to read for postgraduate degrees under the proposed project are not eligible to be Principal Investigators or Co – Investigators.
- The Principal Investigator (PI) with adequate postgraduate research qualification and expertise in the proposed area of research as specified in the guidelines, can employ a research student under the grant.
- If the grant supports the student’s stipend, it is mandatory that the student registers for a postgraduate degree from KDU.
- Any other member of the research group who does directly contribute to the conceptual buildup of the proposal but contribute with providing specific expertise or resources could be listed as collaborators.

- Co-Investigators should make a significant intellectual contribution to the project while assuming the responsibility for all aspects of the project, from the conceptualization to the completion.
- All apparatus and materials purchased and all scientific equipment and instruments paid for with KDU Research Grants shall be the property of the KDU. All capital items purchased for the use of the research should be inventoried under the faculty of the PI and after the completion of the project, they should be handed over to the relevant faculty.
- Each grantee is obligated to furnish the KDU with one reprint or copy of any published report of research sponsored in part or in full by the KDU Research grant. Any such publication should carry a credit line reading, "Supported in Part by KDU Research Grant No." in the acknowledgement section.

5.0 POLICY STATEMENT

In line with the vision and mission of the KDU to become a nationally and internationally known for its unique ability to engage both undergraduate and graduate students in distinctive and interdisciplinary higher education while ensuring a high-quality, learner-centered educational experience through undergraduate, graduate, and professional programmes along with high quality research across many disciplines, the KDU should take a strong approach to develop a culture of competitive research and innovation among staff and students in order to improve the quality of education. The KDU shall invest in the development and promotion of an institutional research culture that values the conduct and communication of scholarship, research and innovation.

6.0 DEFINITIONS

(a) **Research** can be broadly defined as a systematic and disciplined activity undertaken to create and advance knowledge. It involves various forms across disciplines including scientific and social research findings, the creation or refinement of concepts and theories, techniques or compositions, or the extension of current understanding through critical analysis. The common features of research include a systematic and disciplined methodology, a commitment to publish the results of the findings and their peer review. The publication element of research also varies according to discipline and may include publication of results in journals or monographs or books to the performance of creative compositions.

(b) **Researcher** refers to staff or students who conduct research.

(c) **Academic Staff** Academic staff means personnel whose primary function includes teaching, curriculum development, preparation of learning materials, instructional design, programme delivery, assessment, quality assurance, student support, scholarship and research, and shall include such persons as may be designated or

recognised for such purposes by Council on the recommendation of Senate.

(d) **Student** refers to a registered student at the university.

(e) **University** refers to the Kotelawala Defence University.

(f) **Innovation** refers to the creation and implementation of either forms of processes, products, services or new ways of delivery that can provide a significant improvement on results, efficiency, effectiveness or quality.

(g) **Principle Investigator (PI)** is the primary individual responsible for the preparation, conduct, and administration of a research grant, cooperative agreement, training or public service project, contract, or other sponsored project in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and institutional policy governing the conduct of sponsored research.

(h) **Co-Investigator (Co-I)** are key personnel who have responsibilities similar to that of a PI on research projects. While the PI has ultimate responsibility for the conduct of a research project, the Co-I is also obligated to ensure the project is conducted in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and institutional policy governing the conduct of sponsored research.

(h) **Grant** is an amount of money that KDU gives to an individual for the purpose of conducting research

(i) **Grantee/ Awardee** is an individual to whom a grant has been awarded.

7.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Implementation of the Research Grant Policy is coordinated and managed by a number of bodies and committees. Their roles and responsibilities are as follows:

7.1 - Role of the Office of the Dean Research and Development

The office of the Dean Research and Development Office (RDO), established at KDU for the first time in Sri Lanka, oversee the overall coordination and management of research activities of all Faculties, Centres, and other academic Units of the KDU. Through the RDO, KDU research grants are annually offered, managed and monitored.

- a. The RDO will reserve budgetary allocations in the Research and Development budget of KDU.
- b. The RDO will serve as the convener to the KDU Research Grant Committee (RGC), who will make

- recommendations to the Vice Chancellor, on the suitability of the research proposal for funding,
- c. THE RDO will call applications for research grants every year
 - d. The RDO will forward the application to the RGC for nominating reviewers
 - e. THE RDO will send the proposals for reviewers, convey the reviewers' feedback to the Principle Investigators if any revision to the proposals are needed, and convey the evaluation of the reviewers to the RGC to make the final recommendations on the proposal.
 - f. The RDO office will sent the Awardees the award letters, will conduct awareness workshops on the procedures relevant to the research grants.
 - g. The RDO and will monitor the progress of the research projects, hold progress evaluation committee meetings and will report to the RGC on the progress of each project, , until its completion.

7.2. - Role of the KDU Research Grant Committee (RGC)

The mandate of KDU-RGC is to develop the University's strategy for promoting research, scholarship and innovation by KDU staff and students, contributing to the University's Vision and Mission. KDU Research Grant Committee (KDU –RGC) will review the research grant proposals received by the RDO, for appointing suitable evaluators. The evaluators are expected to evaluate all aspects of the research proposals and make their assessment on the academic quality of the proposal. The RGC will make recommendations to the Vice Chancellor on the suitability of funding of the research proposals based on the reviewers' assessments and the funding availability in the given year. The KDU – RGC shall also be involved in the on-going monitoring of the conduct of research projects that are granted for funding.

7.3. - Role of the Deans, Directors and Heads of the Departments

Heads of Departments (HoD) /Directors of Centres/ Deans of the faculties are responsible for providing the required freedom and resources (laboratory/ IT support as relevant) for individual researches/ research cells/ research groups, under their purview, to efficiently carry out research. The capital items funded through KDU research grants by their staff members, will be inventoried under the respective faculty/ department/ centre, and should ensure their productive utilization by the faculty/ department/ centre after the completion of the grant period. They should further provide nominations as suitable reviewers for evaluating the grant proposals submitted from their units, to the RGC, ensuring the double blind process of proposal evaluation is maintained.

7.4. - Role of the investigators and the support research personnel

The investigators are responsible for the conductance of research supported by KDU research grant schemes in accordance with this policy, and related other policies and procedures of KDU ensuring that research

students/ trainees / assistants, technicians working for the research grant, under their supervision, meet relevant research integrity compliance obligations. Research supervisors are responsible for the health and safety of any student or staff involved in or affected by the research. The investigators adhere to the procurement guidelines laid down by the bursar's office relevant to funding utilization of the research grants.

8.0 IMPLEMENTATION

8.1. Application Process

Applications for grants will be advertised once a year in Office of the research and Development website: <https://kdu.ac.lk/research-and-development/> . Applicants seeking for the research grants are encouraged to go through guidelines available on https://kdu.ac.lk/research-and-development/?page_id=104 . All grants' applications and proposals must be accompanied with an internally prepared budget. Application can be downloaded from the above website and duly completed application should be sent (Hardcopy) to the office of the Dean Research and Development, through the Dean of the relevant faculty, with a soft copy of the application, proposals being emailed to deanrad@kdu.ac.lk/ staff_rad@kdu.ac.lk on or before the dead line.

The applications will be processed by the RDO with regard to its conformity with the KDU guidelines. The selected applications will be sent to two reviewers for evaluation. Based on the evaluation reports submitted by the two reviewers, the RGC will make a collective recommendation for funding, not funding or for revising the applications, to the Vice Chancellor. The applicant may be invited to make a clarifications on the proposed project to the RGC, if required. The applicants whose applications have not been approved by the Board, will be informed with reasons. The award letter and the contractual agreement will be sent to the applicants whose research proposals have been approved by the Vice Chancellor. The fund will be disbursed for the year 1, and the rest subject to satisfactory physical and financial progress.

8.2. Application Reviewing Process

The applications selected by the RGC, will be sent to two reviewers for evaluation (at least one is external). The evaluation of proposals are double blind, where the names of evaluators and the reviewers are unknown to each other. The heads/ deans / directors should ensure this while nominating suitable evaluators to the RGC. The evaluators' comments will be shared with the Principle Investigator, if any revision is needed on the proposal if requested by the reviewers. The finalized assessments received from the evaluators, after addressing their comments by the applicants, if any, will be then presented to the RGC committee, by the RDO, for the final decision on recommendation. In the case of discrepancies by the assessments of the two reviewers, the

RGC will seek the evaluation of the proposal by a third reviewer. Final approval on granting funds will be taken by the Vice Chancellor of KDU, on the basis of all the recommendations by KDU – RGC and on the availability of funds under each scheme. The award letter and the contractual agreement will be sent to the applicants whose research proposals have been approved by the Vice Chancellor.

8.3. Monitoring grants and records keeping

The conduct of research project under the KDU Research Grants will be evaluated by the relevant progress evaluation Committee (PEC) and monitored by the RGC. The release of funds for the subsequent years of the granting period will depend on the recommendations by the PEC and the RGC.

8.3.1. Monitoring Reports

Half yearly Progress Reports according to the KDU format should be submitted through the Head of the Department / Division with his/her comments by the grantees for evaluation by the PEC until the completion of the grant period. Irrespective of the date of commencement of the project, the progress reports should be submitted by 15th June and 15th December every year by the grantees. A comprehensive Final Report (three hard copies & one soft copy) according to the KDU format should be submitted within 03 months from the date of completion of project period. The Final Report that needs to be revised will be returned to the Principal Investigator for resubmission with revision. The follow up activities will be coordinated by the RDO.

8.3.2 Monitoring Progress

Awardees are responsible for managing operations of their grants. KDU- RGC monitor the grants carefully. This monitoring process is accomplished through review reports and correspondence received from the grantee semiannually. The RGC will recommend certain amendments requested by the grantees on the project, as it is operational, after identifying potential problems/ technical difficulties where necessary and possible. . A separate progress evaluation committee (PEC) appointed for different disciplines will closely evaluate the progress with each project and will make recommendations to the RGC. The evaluation will be based on timely achieving the research objectives according to the proposal, proper utilization of funds and the output generated by means of publications etc. Any deviations from the initial proposals, if necessary, should be reported by the grantees in the progress report, for the PEC to evaluate and recommend to RGC.

8.3.3 Monitoring expenditures

The awardees are requested to submit the expenditure according to the financial statement according to the

format provided with their progress report, final report and also on demand. The PEC monitor grantee's expenditures under individual grants within each budget period by reviewing grantee cash expenditure reports to determine whether they indicate a pattern of accelerated or delayed expenditures. Accelerated or delayed expenditures may result in a grantee's inability to complete the approved project within the approved budget and period of performance. The expenditure should be consistent with the approved budget unless prior approval of the RGC is obtained for any deviations.

8.3.4. Close out and Record retention

The RDO closes all-research grants as soon as the final report is approved by the RGC. Grant holders are advised to retain financial and programmatic records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other records that are required by the terms of a grant, for a period of 05 Years from the date final report submitted.

8.4 Workshop on the procedures relevant to utilizing research grants for the grant awardees

Information seminar/ workshops on commencing project work, handling the grant, appointing research assistants/ technical assistants/ claiming expenditures, document submissions will be conducted by the Office of the Dean (Research and Development). The Assistant Bursar (Research and development) will educate the grantees on the procurement procedures relevant to the grants during these workshops.

9.0 POLICY REVIEW AND AMMENDMENTS

- (a) This policy may reviewed after every three years or earlier as necessary.
- (b) Sub revisions may be initiated on the recommendation of the Dean Research and Development and/or the directions of the Vice- Chancellor of KDU
- (c) Any such revision and/or amendments shall be forwarded for the recommendation of the Research Grant Committee, and become effective from the approved by the BoM of the University.