Faculty Research Grants Program (FReG)

Prime Foundation

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# Background & Objectives

Peshawar Medical College and other academic institutes established by Prime Foundation, Pakistan, have aimed at fostering a research culture at all levels right from inception. In order to promote and catalyze research activity at faculty level, the Faculty Research Grants (FReG) Program has been initiated. The FReG program awards research grants on competitive basis to faculty members of Peshawar Medical College, Peshawar Dental College, Rufaida College of Nursing, Prime Institute of Public Health, Mercy Teaching Hospital, Kuwait Teaching Hospital and Prime Medical & Surgical Complex. The program funds small scale health research studies from all related disciplines.

# Faculty Research Grants Office

The FReG office is housed in Peshawar Medical College and is tasked with overall management of the program including the following and other related tasks:

1. Initiation of call for proposals
2. Conduct orientation seminars to promote FReG program among faculty
3. Collection of applications
4. Coordination with IEC to ensure timely review of applications
5. Evaluating proposals and awarding grants (through technical evaluation committee)
6. Coordination with IRB for management of research funding
7. Reviewing and monitoring research grants’ performance during the grant cycle
8. Reporting yearly outputs to Advisor Health Education, Prime Foundation
9. Provide training opportunities and resources to facilitate faculty members in research proposal development
10. Providing recommendations for improving the scale, scope and quality of faculty research activities in the next grant cycle

The grants office will be staffed with the following positions:

1. Grants manager (part-time, senior faculty member) for overall management of grants office, acting as grant issuing authority and coordinating with other entities as required for program management.
2. Grants officer (part-time) for assisting the grant manager in technical matters and acting as focal point for public relations.
3. Admin & Finance assistant (full-time) for administrative support and office management throughout the year.

The IEC for ethical clearance of proposals of FReG applicants will be the same as that for Prime Foundation.

The Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) will consist of three members, and will be notified every three years by the Grants Manager in consultation with CE Prime Foundation / Dean Peshawar Medical College. Two additional co-opted members may be invited to serve on TEC as advisors, subject specialists or act as a substitute of regular TEC members if needed. The Grants Manager shall attempt to recruit a balanced mix of experts for TEC, with expertise in different subject areas (based on that year’s application pool) and complimentary set of skills. The members of TEC must fulfill the following eligibility criteria:

* Have demonstrated research experience in health related research relevant to the application pool (including publications)
* Preferably not be an applicant (Principal or Co-Investigator) for FReG in that year (an exception to this rule would require substituting that TEC member with a temporary co-opted member for evaluating applications of that grant cycle)
* Have at least Masters or higher qualification with three or more years of academic/research experience
* Express willingness to dedicate time and effort for conducting a thorough and honest evaluation of the proposals

# General Guidelines

The research awards will be given in the accordance with the following guidelines:

1. There will an annual call for proposals, involving a formal application, evaluation and public announcement of successful applicants.
   1. The application will be on a prescribed format.
   2. Completed applications received by agreed deadline will be forwarded for technical evaluation by a committee. Membership of the panel will be honorary and based on defined criteria and availability of relevant experts for the evaluation.
   3. After technical evaluation, only selected proposals will be forwarded to IEC for ethical clearance.
   4. Public announcement of successful applicants who have cleared both technical and ethical review will be done.
2. Funding limit will be up to PKR 100,000 per grant (excluding any external funding)
3. Grants may be awarded based on a fixed number of slots per year.
4. Research proposals may involve basic or applied research. Grants may be channelled into specific themes for focused research under a priority agenda. Priority agenda shall be defined before the announcement of grant opportunities.
5. In case of multiple funding sources, a grant MoU will clearly define the terms under which support funding is allowed for the project in question.
6. PG students who are not faculty members, are not eligible for this grant.
7. In case equipment with a useful life of one year or more must be purchased, it will remain the property of the allied institute and should be returned to that institute at conclusion of the project under a proper inventory.
8. The grant applicant must have an approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the time of grant application.
9. Maximum duration of research project should preferably not exceed one year. Proposals exceeding this duration should have sound rationale, and will require grant renewal at the end of year.

# Technical Evaluation

FReG’s designated Technical Evaluation Committee will assess proposals on the following criteria.

1. Clear explanation of problem background and relevant prior research.
2. Clearly defined research question/hypothesis/goal/objective of the project.
3. Significance of the research outputs in terms of advancing knowledge, or generating impact in academic or applied aspects.
4. Technical/methodological soundness of the proposal and its approach towards the research question.
5. Clarity and overall quality of written project description.
6. Practicality of the project workplan.
7. Soundness of budget justification.
8. Clearly stated dissemination and/or publication plan.
9. Prior experience and qualification of the one or more applicants in relevance to the proposed project, especially past achievements in research. Technically sound proposals from new researchers will be encouraged however.
10. Relevance to priority research agenda for that particular grant cycle.

# Grant Acceptance

Acceptance of FReG grant award by the grantee(s) agree(s) will entail signing a Memorandum of Agreement with FReG program of Prime Foundation including but not limited to the following requirements:

1. The grantee(s) shall
   1. Complete the stipulated research within the agreed duration (except in case of unforeseen events of nature causing major obstacles in completion of the project). Such circumstances should be communicated to FReG office well in time.
   2. Adhere to strict ethical protocols, where applicable throughout the research study.
   3. Demonstrate an orderly conduct in line with mission and values of Prime Foundation.
   4. Complete all required reports and other deliverables as specified in section on deliverables.
2. Failure to honor these requirements will lead to ineligibility for future grant awards and/or initiation of disciplinary action.

# Expected deliverables

The grantee(s) after acceptance of grant will be required to furnish the following deliverables at specified deadlines:

1. Interim progress report latest by the mid of the project duration, describing progress made thus far in research work and expenses made.
2. Final project report not later than one month after conclusion of the project, describing in detail the research work (on prescribed format), results and achievements and financial details of all expenses made against budget.
3. Evidence of dissemination in departmental seminars and/or manuscript of the research work.

# Application process

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Application preparation | Use the FReG application guidelines |
| Submission | Submit the application via email by deadline |
| Technical evaluation | Applications are forwarded by FReG office to TEC for technical review as per defined criteria |
| Ethical clearance | Applications that are considered technically sound, will be forwarded to IEC for ethical clearance |
| Announcement of successful applications | Successful applicants are announced based on results of technical and ethical evaluation, and available funding |
| Grant acceptance | Principal Investigator (PI) signs MoU with FReG office |
| Initiation of activities | PI provides evidence of initiation of activities within one month of agreed date of project initiation |
| Interim report | PI provides interim report as per schedule |
| Final report | PI provides final report as per schedule |
| Dissemination / manuscript for publication | Research results are presented/disseminated through departmental/institutional faculty seminar or preferably in an external scientific conference. If publication in a scientific journal is not possible by the end of grant period, PI shall provide a draft manuscript for publication.  Affiliation to primary institute and Riphah International University must mentioned in publication and a copy of publication should be provided to FReG office. |

## FReG Application Form

The application form for FReG is given below with guidance provided for filling out each section. Word limits are defined for each section within parentheses.

**Project Title (60 words)**

Provide a clear and crisp title of your proposed research project in the box below.

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| --- |
|  |

**Team**

Please provide details of all team members in the table below, after express consent.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Full Name | Role in project (PI/CI) | Current designation |
|  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |
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*Contact information of Principal Investigator:*

|  |
| --- |
| Name:  Email:  Alternate Email:  Phone:  Cell:  Postal: |

**Abstract (300 words)**

Provide a brief overview of the research project including the research question, rationale and methodology.

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**Background of the problem (350 words excluding references)**

Briefly describe the background information of the research project and the rationale behind the study. References may be added in Vancouver style.

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**Purpose / Objectives of the study (200 words)**

List the research objectives. These should be three or less.

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| 1.  2.  3. |

**Significance and practical implications (300 words)**

Describe how your research project and its results will influence the current practice or improve upon the existing state of affairs. Be specific in your response.

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**Methodology (500 words)**

Briefly describe the methodology outlining the key elements as mentioned below and another deemed necessary.

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| --- |
| Study design:  Setting:  Target population:  Sampling technique:  Sample size:  Variables included in data collection tool:  (also attach the actual tool)  Data analysis plan: |

**Itemized Budget**

Prepare and attach a single page budget based on the FReG budget template. It includes listing the estimated costs for each category of the expenditure with justification as well as indicating the proportion that will be paid by FReG. Travel is covered only if it is related to conducting the research. The budget template should include the total budget of the research project, the amount requested from the FReG program, and amount arranged from an external source (if any).

[See attached Excel sheet budget template]

**Workplan**

Prepare and attach a workplan using the FReG workplan template and modify as necessary. Workplan should include a month-wise breakdown of all activities that are to be completed in this project.

[See attached Excel sheet budget template]

**Attachments required with application**

Other documents (in addition to budget document, timeline, and data collection tool) required for successful submission include:

* Data collection tool
* Ethical Review Form
* Grant budget
* Grant workplan
* CVs of the primary and secondary applicants
* List of past research publications (if any)
* Final report of previous FReG project (if any completed)

## Online application

The application deadline will be announced in October 2014.