



Call for Collaboration Research and Innovation Project

1. BACKGROUND OF THE AASTMT GRANT CALL

To contribute to the aspirations of the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT) becoming a model national university in the region, recognized for high-quality education, research, training and consultancy, the AASTMT takes a leading role in creating the environment and the tools to foster excellence in research. Therefore, the AASTMT's vision places equal emphasis on teaching and research and serves researchers by providing full support and effective administrative expertise to the AASTMT's research community. In this spirit, the AASTMT is launching the third call for funding opportunities to assist researcher's endeavors to develop projects that serve their own progress as well as that of the AASTMT and the national and regional states. This call provides opportunities for researchers at all levels; from students to professionals, in the private, public, and academic sectors. The AASTMT GRANT is one of the Scientific Research activities and the primary means by which the AASTMT seeks to address research strategy and key national needs. This call for proposals for AASTMT's Innovation Research Grants (IRG) is organized and managed for the benefit of the Innovation Hub of AASTMT's Al-Alamein smart campus to which all the grant's outcomes and deliverables will be transferred.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE AASTMT GRANT CALL

The goal of this call is to create long-term research collaboration between AASTMT researchers and regional research institutions through open competition to achieve the following objects:

- i. Promote multidisciplinary collaborative R&D projects within AASTMT,
- ii. Support research outputs exploitation and innovation with closer links to regional industries,
- iii. Promote the key issues of competitiveness, collaboration and venture capital investment,
- iv. Support applied research projects that contribute to the achievement of sustainable development,
- v. Raise awareness on importance of R&D and innovation in developing new technologies and their economic and social impacts.



3. THEMATIC FOCUS AND FUNDED ACTIVITIES

The activities/instruments, which are joints, undertaken by a partnership of AASTMT researchers and other institutions (consortium), which will be funded by this call are:

3.1. Collaborative Research Project (CRP)

This theme targets new ideas that serve the strategic research plan of AASTMT to produce new knowledge through scientific research to develop a working but not necessarily complete product. The scope of this theme is to establish evidence on a new concept with a measurable added value in any subject category. The maximum allowable budget for this theme is EGP 500,000 with a maximum duration of one year. A successful application should include the names and affiliations of at least two researchers in addition to the PI. Participating researchers can be postgraduate students. The ideal expected output from a CRP is a patent/intellectual property. Other accepted output can be peer-reviewed journal publications (Scopus indexed journals at least) and working prototypes/pilot processes. It may still need additional research for improving its output, miss some features, or need customization for specific applications.

3.2. Collaborative Innovation Project (CIP)

This theme targets an existing and proven concept/idea that requires further research to mature into a real-world application to bridge the gap between the outcomes of research projects and commercialization, by supporting activities related to the first application and further market uptake of innovative techniques, processes, products or services, and helping overcome barriers that could hamper their commercial success. A rigorous feasibility analysis must be provided to demonstrate the expected added value and required resources for CIP. The maximum allowable budget for this theme is EGP 1,000,000 with a maximum duration of 24 months. A successful application should include the names and affiliations of at least four researchers in addition to the PI. Collaboration with the industry and other academic institutions from the Arab world is highly encouraged and valued in this theme. The ideal



expected output of an CIP is a working real-world application that demonstrates added value and scalability. Other accepted outputs can be peer-reviewed journal publications (JCR indexed journals at least) and patents. CIP should satisfy all the specifications of a commercial product and should be ready to hit the market by the conclusion of the CIP period.

The AASTMT encourages multi-disciplinary projects. The AASTMT GRANT is to advance knowledge and education by supporting original, competitively-selected research in all fields of sciences with emphasis on the following pillars of the AASTMT Strategy:

- Computer Science and ICT
- Basic and Fundamental Science (Physics, Biology, Chemistry and Mathematics)
- Climate change and Environmental Sciences
- Economics
- Engineering (All disciplines including marine and offshore engineering)
- Medical Sciences (Pharmaceutics, dentistry and medicine)
- Social Sciences / Arts / Humanities (Law, Linguistics, management / business / administration)
- Energy
- Logistic sciences
- Water resource management
- Food and Agriculture.
- Archeology

4. DURATION, FUNDING SCOPE

The AASTMT GRANT is a one-cycle grant application of funding, ranging from:

- 200,000 to 500,000 pound per proposal and period of 6 to 12 Months for the CRP, and.
- 500,000 to 1,000,000 pound per proposal and period of 12 months to 24 months for the CIP.

The funding requested should therefore be realistically adjusted to the actual needs of the proposal. AASTMT reserves the right to reduce the requested total budget, based on the recommendations of the Peer Revision.



5. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND PROJECT CONSORTIA

The project consortium must comprise of the Principal Investigator (PI) who should be a Researcher from the AASTMT and a PhD holder, with applicants from Egypt (who may represent research, higher education entities, industrial companies and other legal entities such as NGOs), as the AASTMT encourages collaborative projects involving teams from other institutions and stakeholders. A letter of intent will be needed from the external institutions signed and stamped by the legal representative of that research unit.

Each project partner will be represented by a Principal Investigator (PI) who must hold a research-oriented doctorate and have a good track record in research and particularly strong research skills and experience in the field of the proposed project. The Project Consortium designates one of the PI's as Project Coordinator or the Lead PI (LPI). Each researcher is eligible to participate as a PI coordinator or a team member in one project in all ongoing cycles. Participate in the preparation of the proposal and budget plays a distinct role in the implementation of the action cannot sell equipment to the applicant. The consortium of applicants will need to draw up a consortium agreement, which should include the fair handling of IPR, before the Grant Agreements. Researchers submitting proposals are obliged to report submission of the same or similar proposals to other funding schemes, as well as funds awarded as a result of such submission. AASTMT retains the right to reconsider the granting of funds should the concerned project consortium fail to do so. Location Actions must take place in the AASTMT premises, while the outcomes and deliverables at the end of the project will be transferred to Al-Alamein AASTMT New Campus. Table 1 shows the eligibility requirements for a successful research team applying for these proposal.

Table 1. Eligibility requirements for team members based on their designated research role

Team member	Role		
	PI	Co-PI	Researcher
AASTMT Staff	Necessary	Necessary	Not Necessary
Ph.D.	Necessary	Not Necessary	Not Necessary
Non-AASTMT Staff	Not allowed	Not allowed	Allowed



6. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

Use only the official and updated AASTMT GRANT proposal templates provided on the Download Centre at (<https://aastmtic.aast.edu/sri/>) using the updated official template. Otherwise, the proposal will be disqualified. The application with the GANNT form and the Budget form should be submitted on line to the above site in PDF format. Incomplete proposals may be rejected.

7. EVALUATION

All proposals will be evaluated in order to select the best projects to receive IRG funding. The process is illustrated in figure 1. Eligibility check aims are ensuring that the proposal application is eligible to undergo the evaluation process. Technical evaluation is conducted by expert referees in the proposal's subject and area of interest. The referees will strive to ensure that eligible proposals provide tangible, measurable and achievable research plans with sufficient outcome to warrant funding. A panel from the AASTMT will examine the short listed projects to recommend final list.

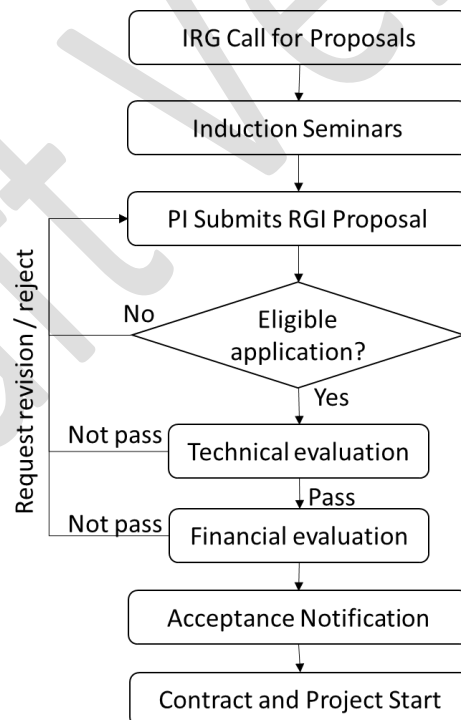


Figure 1. Flowchart of the evaluation and selection criteria showing the competition hierarchy.



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Financial evaluation will be conducted by the budgetary department in collaboration with research teams in order to maximize the rate of investment of IRG in each project. Once the technical and financial evaluations are passed, the applicant will be notified to accept the grant and start the project. IRG contracts are regulatory documents that governs the periodic due diligence activities for accepted project during their active duration. All eligible proposals will be evaluated using a point based system (as shown in the proposal application form) and the selection of accepted projects will be undertaken based on the point score until the designated budget is completed. The evaluation process includes the following Steps:

Eligibility check

The AASTMT will check the eligibility of all submitted proposals taking into consideration the general eligibility criteria. As General eligibility criteria, Proposals must comply with the description of the proposal as described in Section 7 and must meet the submission deadline. Non-eligible proposals will be rejected.

Peer review

A dedicated pool of evaluators or Peer Reviewers PRs consisting of independent experts assesses anonymously the merits of the submitted proposals. They will also provide narrative comments, and list the strengths and weaknesses in each criterion. An overall threshold of 70% of the maximum score needs to be met for a proposal to be considered for funding. PRs will score proposals based on six sets of criteria: significance, originality, approach/methodology, research team, research environment and budget, as follows:

Significance (Maximum 30 points):

How significant is the research in advancing knowledge within/across its discipline, in terms of:

- Relevance of the projected results to problems in specific research area?
- Relevance of the literature cited?
- Methods of dissemination?



How significant is the envisaged outcome in addressing priority issues, including AASTMT strategy, in areas that are critical to AASTMT, in terms of:

- Benefits of the proposed research activity to AASTMT?
- Plans for continuing or expanding the project after AASTMT support ends?

Originality (Maximum 20 Points):

To what extent is the proposed research original or novel in terms of (as applicable):

- Idea/Concept?
- Approach/Methodology?
- Contribution to knowledge or to the literature in the subject?

Approach/Methodology (Maximum 15 Points):

How well conceived and organized is the overall proposed project in terms of:

- Approach/Methodology (such as; experimental design, statistical methods, data collection and analysis)?
- Timeline and specific aims?

Qualifications of Research Team (Maximum 20 Points):

- How well qualified are the research teams inside/outside AASTMT and are their designated roles suitable to conduct the research (if appropriate, consider prior work)

Resources (Maximum 5 Points):

How adequate are the resources in supporting the project activity?

Budget (Maximum 10 Points):

How realistic is the proposed budget in terms of (as applicable) Personnel? Equipment and materials? Travel? Miscellaneous?

Bonus Points will be added for collaboration as per the following criteria below. Those bonus points will be given after verification of actual collaboration.

- Five bonus points for collaboration with non-academic stakeholders who have a co- finance for the project.
- Five bonus point for collaboration with multidisciplinary projects from different filed of research.



Review Committee and Funding Decision

The Review Committee will consolidate the results of the evaluation and make recommendations to the AASTMT GRANT in the form of a ranking list of Proposals proposed for funding. The Review Committee will in particular consider proposals that have received an abnormally broad span of scores from the evaluators. Selected consortia will be asked to elaborate their respective consortium agreement before any contract or award can be made.

The eligible costs under IRG call generally covers all expenses that foster the research calibre of AASTMT. Capacity building, human capital development and dissemination activities are the main three categories of eligible costs under IRG call.

- Salaries, wages and man-hour costs can be accepted if sufficient justification is provided and with a maximum ceiling of 20% of the total project budget.
- All expenses related to travel and accommodation compensation are NOT allowed except for activities justifiably crucial to the project (such as data collection and training) with a maximum ceiling of 5% of the total project budget.
- Costs of generic equipment and devices (laptops, digital camera, smart phones...etc) is NOT an eligible expense under the IRG call.
- If the proposal include cost for software licenses, the applicants must consult with the AASTMT-CNDC prior to ensure that the required software is not already licensed at AASTMT and that its technical requirements can be met at AASTMT.
- Costs for dissemination activities (press conference, seminar, digital content creation, etc.) are limited to 5%.
- Equipment is an AASTMT assets and cannot be moved outside the AASTMT campuses.

8. Contact

Deanery of Scientific Research and Innovation

Arab Academy for Science and Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT)

Abu Kir Campus, P.O. Box: 1029 Miami, Alexandria, EGYPT

Email: rriu@ast.edu; ygd@ast.edu; Telephone: Ext 1069



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9. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Publication of the Call for Proposals	15 December 2020
Deadline for proposal submission	30 Jan 2021
Online peer review by peer reviewers	1 March 2021
Scientific Review Committee Project Selection Meeting and Final Funding Decision	15 March 2021
Start of projects	1 April 2021

10. LIST OF ITEMS NOT ALLOABLE UNDER MISCELLANEOUS

Maintenance and services for personal and/or office use
Events and Meetings Expenses
External Binding & Printing Service unless dedicated to research output
Food and Beverages Expenses
Social and Entertainment Activities
Fundraising and investment
Donations and contributions
Fines and Penalties
Marketing Expenses
Local transportation unless for research purposes related to the awarded grants.
Contingencies
Faculty Awards, Honoraria, Gifts, Vouchers
Debts
Insurance
Membership costs
Fees for Ethical Boards
Fees for Trustees, Alumni
Any item covered by any of the budget categories