

Research & Development Office

Handbook for Academic Staff

AOU

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Introduction

Welcome to the official Research and Development (R&D) Handbook for the Arab Open University (AOU) – Kuwait. This document serves as a comprehensive guide for academic staff seeking support for their scholarly activities. It outlines the step-by-step procedures, required documentation, and communication protocols.

Contact and Submission Information

All applications must be submitted directly to the **designated email address** for your respective faculty. Submissions sent to incorrect addresses may face processing delays.

Table 1: Faculty Email Directory

Faculty	Designated R&D Email Address
Faculty of Business Studies (FBS)	rdfbs@aou.edu.kw
Faculty of Computer Studies (FCS)	rdfcs@aou.edu.kw
Faculty of Language Studies (FLS)	rd@aou.edu.kw
General Studies (GS)	rdgr@aou.edu.kw

Section 1: Applying for Research Funds

The R&D Office provides **two main types of research funds** to support academic staff: **Scientific Research Grant** (دعم مشروع بحث علمي) and **Scientific Research Publication Award** (مكافأة نشر بحث علمي). Each type has its own eligibility criteria, required documentation, and processing timeline, as detailed below. Eligibility for the Scientific Research Grant and the Scientific Research Publication Award is restricted to the **first author** of the research paper.

1.1 Scientific Research Grant (دعم مشروع بحث علمي)

Securing a research grant requires a formal application process. The R&D Office evaluates proposals based on academic merit, feasibility, and alignment with institutional goals. Approved projects receive financial support of up to USD 1,000, as determined by the R&D Committee and in accordance with institutional research funding policies.

Step-by-Step Application Process

Step 1: Obtain the Application Form

Download the official Scientific Research Grant Project form from the university website under the "[Research and development forms](#)" section.

Step 2: Submit Your Application

Once you have completed the form, send it to the **designated R&D email address for your faculty** (Kindly refer to **Table 1**).

Applications must be submitted **between the 1st and the 7th of each month**.

⚠ IMPORTANT ALERT: The research project must be original and must not have been previously submitted to any journal. The paper should be submitted to the journal **only after** the R&D Committee decision has been issued.

Step 3: Peer Review Assignment

Upon receiving the grant application, the R&D Office will assign an independent peer reviewer. This evaluation process typically takes between 10 to 20 working days.

Step 4: R&D Committee Review

Following the peer review, the grant application will be presented at the R&D Committee's monthly meeting.

Step 5: Decision and Financial Processing

After the R&D Committee is held, one of two decisions will be made:

If Approved:

The Human Resources (HR) Office will communicate with you directly regarding the decision number. Following the meeting of the R&D Committee, **up to ten (10) working days** should be allowed for HR to initiate related communication. Upon completion of HR processing, the application is forwarded to the Finance Department for the issuance of the financial check. An additional **one (1) week** should be allowed for the check to be issued.

⚠ IMPORTANT ALERT: Kindly refrain from communicating with the HR Department or the Financial Department directly regarding your application status. This is **strictly prohibited** as per R&D Office policy. All inquiries must be directed through the proper channels.

If Rejected:

If your application is not approved by the R&D Committee, the R&D Office will notify you directly via email. The communication will outline the decision, provide an explanation of the reasons, and detail any revisions necessary for resubmission.

Step 6: Closure form to finalize the researcher's file with the R&D Office:

Upon acceptance and/or publication of the paper derived from the research grant proposal, you must submit a closure form to finalize your file with the R&D Office. Once this has been completed, you may apply for a new research grant.

1.2 Scientific Research Publication Award that is supported by a research grant (مكافأة نشر بحث علمي)

This **award** is specifically designed to reward and support authors whose work has reached the final publication stage in a **Scopus-indexed journal (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)**. Once a manuscript has been accepted for publication and the author has submitted the final revision, researchers are eligible to apply for a research grant. The level of financial support is determined based on the journal ranking, whereby publications in **Q1 and Q2** journals are eligible for an award of up to USD 1,500, while publications in **Q3 and Q4** journals are eligible for an award of up to USD 1,000, subject to compliance with institutional policies and approval by the R&D Committee.

Step-by-Step Application Process

Step 1: Prepare Required Documentation

To apply for publication award, the first author is required to prepare the following:

- Correspondence proof that the paper has been approved for publication in its final stage.
- The link to the published paper
- The Scopus link for the journal
- The SJR ([SCImago Journal Rank](#)) link of the journal
- a screenshot from Scopus for the journal
- A PDF copy of the published paper
- A copy of the grant decision

⚠ IMPORTANT ALERT: The published paper must include an acknowledgment indicating that the research project was funded by AOU-Kuwait, with explicit reference to the decision number of the grant.

Step 2: Email Submission of Documentation

Send the required documentation directly to the **designated R&D email address** for your faculty (Kindly refer to **Table 1**).

Step 3: Financial Processing

Once the author has sent the required documentation, the R&D Office will process the application. **If approved**, the process for issuing the financial check takes approximately **30 working days**. **If rejected**, you will receive a direct email notification from the R&D Office detailing the decision.

1.2.1 Scientific Research Publication Award that is NOT supported by a research grant (مكافأة نشر بحث علمي لم يتم دعمها مسبقاً من الجامعة)

This award recognizes faculty members whose AOU-funded research has reached the final publication stage in a **Scopus-indexed Q1, Q2, or Q3 journal**. Eligibility is subject to institutional regulations and approval by the relevant authorities at AOU Headquarters.

Step-by-Step Application Process

Step 1: Prepare the Required Documentation

The first author must prepare and submit all the following documents:

- Proof of final acceptance for publication.
- Link to the published paper.
- Scopus link for the journal.
- [SCImago Journal Rank \(SJR\)](#) link for the journal.
- Screenshot showing the journal's Scopus ranking.
- PDF copy of the published paper.
- Copy of the original research grant decision.

Step 2: Submit the Complete Application

Send all required documents to the designated R&D email address for your faculty, as listed in Table 1. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

Step 3: Referral to the University Rector

The R&D Office will review the application for completeness and forward the request directly to the University Rector.

Step 4: Referral to AOU Headquarters

The University Rector will forward the application to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Scientific Research at AOU Headquarters for review and processing.

Step 5: Final Decision

The applicant will be informed of the final decision after the review process at AOU Headquarters is completed.

1.3 Decree No. (130) – Advancing Scientific Research at Arab Open University to Strengthen global rankings (قرار رقم 130 بشأن تفعيل الخطة التنفيذية للنهوض بالبحث العلمي في الجامعة العربية المفتوحة لتعزيز وتحسين التصنيفات)

This decree aims to strengthen AOU's research output and improve its global academic ranking by encouraging research aligned with the strategic priorities of each university's country.

Step-by-Step Application Process

Step 1: Monitor Periodic Research Calls

Faculty members should regularly monitor the periodic **Calls for Research Proposals** announced by their Faculty Deanship at AOU Headquarters (HQ). Calls may be issued every three or six months and will identify priority research areas relevant to each country.

Step 2: Review the Call Requirements

Carefully review the announced research themes, eligibility requirements, proposal guidelines, required documents, and submission deadline.

Step 3: Prepare the Research Proposal

Prepare your research proposal according to the requirements and template specified in the call. The proposal should clearly align with one of the identified strategic research priorities.

Step 4: Submit the Proposal to the Faculty Deanship

Send the completed proposal and all required documents directly to your Faculty Deanship at Headquarters:

- Faculty of Business Studies (FBS): dean.bs-office@arabou.edu.kw
- Faculty of Computer Studies (FCS): dean.it@arabou.edu.kw
- Faculty of Language Studies (FLS): dean.el@arabou.edu.kw

Step 5: Evaluation and Decision

The relevant Faculty Deanship will evaluate the submitted proposals in coordination with the university's administration. Applicants will be informed of the evaluation outcome and any required revisions.

⚠ IMPORTANT ALERT: Proposal must be submitted within the deadline and directly to the relevant Faculty Deanship using the designated email address.

Section 2: Conference Participation

Attending academic conferences is vital for disseminating research and strengthening professional networks. The R&D Office provides support for eligible conference participation through a structured approval process. Conferences are categorized into two types: **regional** and **international**, each with specific requirements and approval timelines.

Financial support for approved applications includes **a two-way economy class travel ticket, conference registration fees, and a travel allowance**. The travel allowance is provided as a fixed amount equivalent to **USD 800 for regional conferences and USD 1,200 for international conferences**, subject to compliance with institutional policies and approval by the R&D Committee.

Step-by-Step Application Process

Step 1: Obtain the Application Form

Download the Conference Application Form from the AOU Website under the "[Conference Participation](#)" section.

Step 2: Submit Your Application

Complete the form and attach all required supporting documents, including your official conference acceptance letter. Submit the complete package to your **designated faculty R&D email address** (Kindly refer to **Table 1**).

Step 3: R&D Committee Review

The R&D Office will review your application for completeness before presenting it at the monthly R&D Committee meeting.

Decision and Financial Processing

The post-committee process mirrors that of the research grants:

If Approved:

The HR Office will notify you of the decision number within 5-7 working days. Following this, the Financial Department requires one week to process travel and registration support.

⚠ IMPORTANT ALERT: For regional conferences, the application must be submitted at least **one month** prior to the conference date. For international conferences, at least **2 months** prior to the conference date are required to ensure timely processing and approvals.

For international conferences, once the R&D Committee approval is obtained, the ***Letter to HQ – International Conference form*** will be available on the R&D portal; it must be completed and submitted to the R&D Office.

Conference applications that coincide with official examination dates will be **rejected directly** by the R&D Office.

If Rejected:

A formal rejection email will be sent directly to you from the R&D Office.

Additional Requirement (Post-Approval Coordination)

Once conference participation is approved, faculty members are required to formally communicate the decision to the Office of Scientific Research and Affairs. This should be done via email, Email: acaffairs@aou.edu.kw, clearly indicating the **conference title, date, and time of participation**.

Post-Conference Requirement

Upon returning from the conference, all attendees are required to complete and submit the [Conference Participation Report – Closure](#) form within two weeks of their return in order to finalize their file with the R&D Office.

Section 3: Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) Grants

The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) offers competitive research grant funding to support high-impact scientific research. Academic staff at AOU Kuwait who wish to apply for a KFAS research grant project are required to obtain **an official institutional approval letter from the AOU Rector** before submitting their proposal to KFAS. This letter must be attached to the KFAS proposal submission as a mandatory requirement.

KFAS research funding aligns with its **Strategy (2025–2030)**, which focuses on supporting research in key national priority areas, including **Environment, Energy, Health, STEAM Education, Food and Water Security, and Future Economies**. These areas emphasize emerging technologies, sustainability, innovation, and data-driven solutions that contribute to Kuwait's long-term development and global competitiveness.

What We Need From You

To apply for a KFAS research grant, applicants are required to follow a simplified internal process:

Step 1: Submit Expression of Interest

Send an email to the designated R&D email address for your faculty indicating your intention to apply for a KFAS research grant. The email should include:

- Project title
- Names of all participating authors/researchers
- Brief description of the research project

Step 2: Issuance of Official AOU Letter

The Rector's Office will issue an official institutional approval letter addressed to KFAS. This letter is a mandatory requirement for proposal submission and will be sent to you directly by the R&D Office.

Step 3: Submit to KFAS

Attach the official AOU approval letter to your KFAS proposal and submit your application directly through the KFAS portal. Please note that the final funding decision rests entirely with KFAS.

⚠ IMPORTANT ALERT: The AOU approval letter is a mandatory requirement for KFAS submission. Applications submitted to KFAS without the official AOU letter will not be considered. Please allow sufficient time for the internal review process before the KFAS submission deadline.

Section 5: Research Support Services

Beyond funding, the R&D Office offers direct operational support to faculty members engaged in active research. The following services are available on request and require the submission of a form.

5.1 Data Collection Assistance

Use this service when your survey or interview instrument has been finalized and approved, and you are ready to proceed with data collection.

The R&D Office provides operational support during the data collection phase by facilitating access to research participants within the university community. This includes coordinating the distribution of surveys and scheduling interviews with students or staff in a structured and ethically compliant manner.

To request this service, applicants must complete the [Research Data Collection Request Form](#) to ensure that all data collection activities are formally registered, ethically approved, and aligned with institutional guidelines.

5.2 Survey and Interview Pre-Testing Assistance

Use this service when your survey or interview instrument is still under development and requires validation prior to full-scale data collection.

To enhance the validity and reliability of research instruments, the R&D Office provides methodological support through the **pre-testing of survey/questionnaires and interview protocols prior to data collection**. This service enables researchers to identify and address ambiguous, biased, or unclear items, thereby improving the overall quality and clarity of the instrument before deployment.

Also, the R&D Office provides support in generating **QR codes** for approved surveys and questionnaires to facilitate efficient distribution and ease of access for participants.

To request this service, applicants must submit the [Research Instrument Pre-Testing Request Form](#) along with a copy of the survey or interview guide.

5.3 Open Access Research Support

The R&D Office provides financial support of up to **USD 1,000** to contribute towards publication fees for research articles published in **SCOPUS-indexed open access journals (Q1 and Q2 only)**, subject to prior approval and compliance with institutional research and funding guidelines.

Eligibility for this support requires that the journal is **verified through SCImago (SJR) ranking at the time of publication**, and that the article is published with reputable academic publishers, including **Elsevier, Springer, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, and Emerald Publishing**.

Overall Processing Timeline

The table below summarizes the maximum expected processing durations for each phase of an approved application.

Table 2: R&D Workflow Timeline

Phase	Responsible Party	Duration
Peer Review (Research Grant / KFAS)	Independent Reviewer	10–20 working days
R&D Committee Meeting	R&D Committee	Monthly (availability-dependent)
HR Decision Communication	HR Office	20 working days
Financial Check Issuance	Financial Department	1-2 weeks
Research grant Processing	R&D Office	20 working days
Publication Award that is NOT supported by a research grant	R&D Office/ University Rector / Vice President's Office at Headquarters (HQ)	Following the University Rector's referral
KFAS Approval Letter Issuance	R&D Office	After committee approval

For any queries, please contact the R&D Office at rd@aou.edu.kw.