HBKU Thematic Research Grant Program

HBKU Research

Office of Vice President for Research

Call for Application (CFA)

3rd cycle-2025

Contents

1- Program Description

The third cycle of Thematic Research Grant Program (TG) continues HBKU's commitment to advancing high-impact research aligned with the broad 5 research themes and the associated 23 sub-themes outlined in the Qatar Foundation (QF) strategy 2022-2032 . Funded by the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), the program is designed to promote and strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration across HBKU colleges and research institutes in support of these themes and sub-themes.

By supporting innovative, cross-disciplinary projects, the aim is to tackle complex scientific and societal challenges through collaborative approaches that make effective use of institutional resources. The program reinforces HBKU's strategic mission to leverage its integrated research ecosystem and capitalize on the combined expertise of its colleges and research institutes.

2- Program Objectives

1. HBKU Thematic Research Program provides funding to HBKU researchers in support of cutting-edge translational research in support of the five QF thematic research areas and in alignment with HBKU's core areas of expertise.
2. The program intends to stimulate research collaboration through interdisciplinary and cross-entity research projects to tackle key scientific and technological challenges that cut across priority research themes and sub-themes
3. Supporting research that is practical and can be implemented through applications, solutions, technologies, policy influence and legislation.
4. Support forward-thinking, identifying emerging challenges and trends, hence positioning HBKU as a pioneer in societal advancement and economic development.
5. Help leveraging expertise and resources to optimize research impact

3- Program Focused Areas and Desired Outcome

This program encourages proposals that support interdisciplinary research projects, with a strong emphasis on cross-theme and cross-entity collaboration aligning with QF's defined and

HBKU's supported thematic research areas listed in the figure below:

AI	Precision Health	Progressive Education	Sustainability	Social Progress
Education	Preventive Health	Personalized Learning	Sustainable Energy	Arabic Language, Culture & Heritage
Healthcare	Diagnosis & Treatment	Social Emotional & Character Development	Resource Security & Management	Social Responsibility
Smart Cities	National Health Mapping Programs	Glocalized curriculum	Environmental Protection & Restoration	Social Inclusion
Smart Economy				
Smart Society		Inclusion & Equity	Sustainable / Circular Economy	Ethics & Policy
Analytics & Decision Support			Wellbeing	Family Cohesion

Projects should aim to produce one or more of the following outcomes:
- Solution design and implementation
- Feasibility studies and prototyping
- Policy recommendations or development
- Technological innovation or data-driven insights

4- Team Member Eligibility

1. The Applicant (LPI):
   - Must be a HBKU permanent faculty or researcher (including Scientist, Senior Scientist, Principal Investigator, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor)
   - Deans and Executive Directors are not eligible to participate as research team members.
   - Each LPI can submit only one application in this current cycle, but he/she can participate as PI in other proposals.
   - The count of an individual's participation in active Thematic grants as LPI and PI must not exceed two participations.
2. The program requires a minimum collaboration of 2 HBKU entities in each proposal.
3. Student engagement is highly encouraged.
4. External collaborators (Private institutes, research institutes, universities etc.) whether in Qatar or abroad are permitted with zero cost to HBKU.
5. Co-funding from external collaborators is encouraged.

5- Budget & Duration

1. The duration of the grant can be up to 2 years.
2. The budget is up to QAR 200,000 per year (QAR 400,000 for 2 years)
3. Allowable costs include:
   I. **Personnel Cost:**

Role	Daily rate (QAR)- *month has 22 days*
Post-Doctoral Fellow	1,584
Research Associate	1,270
Research Assistant	1,117
Graduate Student (Stipend)	For payment rate, please refer to the Graduate Student Employment Under Sponsored Research Grants (on https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/research/sro/post-award under Award Management Procedures and Guidelines).

   - All HBKU personnel applicants must participate with no personnel cost (Daily fee = 0)

   II. **Equipment**: Capital purchases are not allowed.
   III. **Research Consumables** (stationary is not an eligible cost)
   IV. **External Research Services**
   V. **Travel and miscellaneous costs are not allowed.**
   VI. **Indirect costs are zero.**

4. 20% budget movement from project Year 1 to Year 2 is allowed. The LPI may request a carryover up to 40% (might be granted if strong justification is provided). This request will be contingent on the approval of the OVPR.

6- Cost Sharing

Direct cost sharing (in cash/in-kind) from the PIs' home entities is highly encouraged. A commitment letter signed by the entity signatory (Executive Director/Dean) is required from HBKU home entities and external entities, in the case of co-funding.

7- Submission Timeline

Description	Date
Application Submission is Open	July 15, 2025
Application Submission Deadline	~~September 1, 2025 (11:59 PM midnight)~~ Extended to September 7, 2025 (11:59 AM noon)
Awards Announcement	Early October 2025

8- Submission Process

1- The submission of the proposal is online through the Portal by using the Proposal Internal Approval form via the following link: https://iprocess.hbku.edu.qa/workspace.aspx . The proposal and all supporting documents should be uploaded on the "Supporting Documents" Tab in the Proposal Internal Approval (PIA) form. The online form will be locked automatically straight after the deadline.

2- Applications sent through email and/or without the PIA form will not be accepted.

3- The Applicant should prepare the proposal according to the template provided, which should not exceed 7 pages excluding references and appendices

4- Proposals submitted simultaneously to other funding programs are not accepted. The applicants must declare in the PIA form submission if the proposal has been submitted to another funding opportunity or has received funding from a different source.

5- As part of the submission process, applicants **must indicate whether their proposal falls under Track A or Track B**:

- **Track A: Established Researcher Track**
  For Lead Principal Investigators (PIs) above the rank of Assistant Professor or Scientist. This track is intended for more senior researchers.

- **Track B: Early Research Career Track**
  For Lead PIs who hold the rank of Assistant Professor or Scientist. This track is designed for researchers in the earlier stages of their careers.

  Submissions in each track will be reviewed and assessed separately.

6- The Applicant is required to attach the below annexes, in the same PDF file as the proposal:

- the updated CVs of the LPI and PIs. Please use the template provided and do not exceed 2 pages.
- the letter/s of commitment for cost-sharing from the Home Entity/ies, when applicable.
- Any letters of support from stakeholders.

Applicants who do not adhere to the above criteria for the call will be disqualified from the

programmatic proposal screening.

For any questions about this call, please send a ticket via Portal Ticketing:
https://iprocess.hbku.edu.qa/workspace.aspx
Any requests sent by email will not be processed.

9- Proposal Evaluation

The review and decision process will be through a scoring system in two stages:

1- Programmatic proposal screening
2- Technical Review through internal/external review committee

The number of accepted projects and total amount awarded will be based on the competitiveness of proposals and budget availability.

Primary application evaluation criteria:

1- Alignment with defined thematic focused research areas
2- Clear and well-defined motivation/purpose
3- Clear and well-defined outcomes
4- Partnership with other HBKU entities
5- Leverage of existing research assets
6- Clear milestones and deliverables
7- Team expertise and qualifications with respect to the project proposal

10- Post Award Management

1- The applicant is required to submit a report every six months that describes the progress made, using the progress report template. Interim reviews may be scheduled as needed at the discretion of the OVPR.
2- The payment will be on an installment basis as per below. Payment amounts will be based on the approved project plan and the total amount awarded.

Payment #	Due	Installment
1	Upon signature of this agreement	100% 1st Year budget
2	Upon the approval of the Year 1 progress report	100% of the 2nd year budget