

## HBKU Social Innovation Fund (SOCIF)

The HBKU Innovation Center (IC) is soliciting innovation proposals from all HBKU faculty and researchers for novel solutions, products, business models, and policies for potential funding opportunities. The Fund aims to support local faculty and researchers with industry-driven innovations, targeted at increasing the local capacity, responsiveness, and private enterprise.

HBKU faculty and researchers are encouraged to submit proposals on **novel solutions, products, business models, and policies focusing on social challenges** under SOCIF.

Opportunity	Funding Amount	Duration	Additional Requirements
With Co-fund <b><u>in Kind*</u></b>	Up to QAR 50,000	Maximum of 12 months*	Where there is support from profit/non-profit organizations such as manpower, facility use, data sharing, etc, a signed letter is required.
Multidisciplinary Social Innovation proposals. With Co-fund <b><u>in Kind*</u></b>	Up to QAR 75,000	Maximum of 12 months*	1- Participation of a minimum of two faculty from different HBKU Colleges. 2- Where there is support from profit/non-profit organizations such as manpower, facility use, data sharing, etc, signed letter is required.

\*The SOCIF timeline designed as a 12-month project covers a total of 6 months reserved for research and development activities. There are six months reserved for IP agreements, procurement processes, hiring processes, and additional administrative operations. The research plans should be designed for six months, and initiated, completed within this time frame. **There will be no additional extension available under Social Innovation Funds.**

## HBKU SOCIF Proposal Submission Guideline

- Proposals must be submitted by the announced **proposed deadline**.
- Proposals must be submitted online as a single PDF document using the template provided. Applicants should closely follow the template format (font type, font size, line, and paragraph spacing and overall structure) and submission requirements.
- Proposals must not exceed 10 pages including references, letters, and additional support documents.
- Questions and clarifications should be addressed to: [innovation@hbku.edu.qa](mailto:innovation@hbku.edu.qa)

## HBKU SOCIF Eligibility

1. Only HBKU researchers/faculty members are eligible to apply.
2. Only one submission as Lead Principal Investigator (LPI), Principal Investigator (PI) and/or team member.
3. LPIs, PIs and team members of previous innovation projects are eligible to apply only if their projects have been completed with the final report submitted within the time frame agreed upon, and have been accepted.

4. The ideas must be innovative and address relevant issues local or regional communities need and challenges related to humanities and social sciences. The aim of the research and challenge must be clearly stated in the Executive Summary and relevant sections.
5. The proposed topic and research issue must be the LPI's original idea and/or the profit/non-profit organization partners (the team). The research idea must be presented well and demonstrated by the team.
6. The proposal must lead to a proof of concept and to a **demonstrable impact**.
7. The proposal must identify potential applications for real-life use in the local community, Qatar, and the region.
8. The proposal must prove the interest with a written letter (Applicants need to use ***the template letter to document the profit/non-profit organization support***) from a minimum one profit/non-profit organization, with specific details and written documents.
9. The LPI must complete all sections listed in the proposal template before submission. Incomplete applications will not be considered for review

### HBKU SOCIF Selection Criteria

**Compliance:** The proposal submitted is in line with the template, forms, and documentation including all necessary sections and eligibility criteria? Incomplete applications will not be considered for review.

**Novelty:** In what ways is the idea fundamentally different from existing ones? What is the overall innovation and merit of the idea, with an emphasis on the thought processes behind developing the ideas?

**Value Creation and Impact:** What is the potential of the idea to create significant new social value and impact, if it works?

**Relevance:** In what ways is the idea relevant to the future of Qatar? Who are the potential stakeholders and why? How does it help in developing local capacity, responsiveness, and private enterprise?

**Feasibility:** Is the proposed project doable? Is there a viable timetable and task plan to show the proposed project is affordable and doable within the proposed period and with the funding offered? What are the deliverables in half-term and final term periods?

**Capability:** Does the team have the necessary background, preparation, and motivation? What is the team's capability to execute the idea in the proposed time frame?

### HBKU SOCIF Selection Process

All applications will go through a two-stage independent review and selection process:

1. First, all proposals will go through an independent and blind peer review process.
2. The shortlisted proposals based on the reviews will be given an opportunity for a presentation to a jury comprising a combination of non-HBKU academics, investors, and entrepreneurship and innovation agencies. The jury's evaluation of the presented proposals will lead to the selection of the final awardees.

Essential reminders for applicants:

1. Selected projects are subject to negotiations to include a change in milestones, deliverables, expenses, and terms and conditions, to be conducted by the HBKU IC before finalizing the agreement and release of the funds.
2. The grants will be managed by the HBKU Sponsored Research Office (SRO) through an official agreement with the recipients.
3. Only selected awardees will be informed and announced on the HBKU official website. Applicants should follow up with the announcements on or after the relevant dates.

#### **HBKU SOCIF Budget Eligibility**

1. The LPI, PI, and team members from HBKU will participate at zero cost (without additional compensation).
2. Personnel budget: the budget can be allocated to only part-time/contributors hired as necessary manpower (part-time student researchers, engineers, etc.).
3. Material and consumables for conducting the research and submitting deliverables.
4. The maximum amount allowed to be used for outsourcing (i.e., hiring individuals with certain expertise not available at HBKU and crucial to the proposal, programming, etc. also include the prototyping) is limited to 30% of the total award.
5. If point #4 is not available inside Qatar, the maximum amount allowed to be used outside Qatar is limited to 20% of the total award.
6. Applicants are encouraged to use HBKU, Research Institutes, QF, and branch campus facilities including labs, technicians, computational power, Innovation Lab, etc.

#### **HBKU SOCIF Award management Terms and Conditions:**

1. Once the selection process is finalized, all post-Award activities will be managed and coordinated by the SRO through an official agreement with the awardees.
2. The final approval and project kick-off will be announced after the HBKU IC Annual Budget Approval.
3. The project start date will be announced once an agreement is completed by the awardees.
4. Awardees are expected to present a written mid-term progress report and a final report. Presentations clearly comparing their accomplished tasks against the proposed milestones, which are supposed to be distinct, measurable, and reasonably distributed over the allowed period.
5. Funding will be transferred in two phases after proper reviews:
  - a. The first 60% installment at the signing of the agreement.
  - b. The second 40% installment after the mid-term review decision whether to progress to the second phase, following a thorough technical and financial review.
  - c. The proposals can be withdrawn by the HBKU Innovation Center based on the mid-term evaluations.
6. The QF/HBKU Intellectual Property Policy (IP) will apply to all projects.
7. The Awardees review and comply with all QF/HBKU policies including, but not limited to, research ethics, health and safety, intellectual property, and nondisclosure.

Additional information and online applications can be found at <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/innovation-center>.

For questions and clarifications, please contact:

**HBKU Innovation Center**

***'Innovation to Lead'***

[innovation@hbku.edu.qa](mailto:innovation@hbku.edu.qa)