

HBKU Innovation Funds Office

HBKU Innovative Start-Up Fund (ISF)

The HBKU Innovation Funds solicits business innovation proposals from all HBKU faculty members, scientists, researchers, and students working on novel solutions, business models, products, and policies for potential funding opportunities. This fund aims to support HBKU entrepreneurs with industry-driven innovations targeted at increasing the local capacity, responsiveness, and private enterprise.

HBKU entrepreneurs are encouraged to submit their business plans on **novel solutions, business models, products, and policies** for the below opportunity available under ISF.

Opportunity	Funding Amount	Duration	Additional Requirements
Faculty Members, Researchers, and Entrepreneurs with Start-Ups	Up to QAR 100,000	12 months	Certificate of Registration of the Company

HBKU ISF Proposal Submission Guidelines

- Business plans must be submitted online as a single PDF document including the below information:

Executive Summary - Provide information about your company (including location, team, employees, etc.). Briefly mention what your company does and the reason it will be successful.

Company Description - Provide detailed and specific information about what problems were identified, proofed, and will be solved by your company. Explain who will be your customers and how you will reach them. Provide information about your competitors and your advantages against them.

Product and/or Technology - Provide detailed information about your product, technology and/or service. Explain how it works, how the end-users benefit from your product, and its intellectual property status. Describe the background, benchmarks, existing solutions, comparison, and analysis; this section must entail overview of the scientific and theoretical framework of the idea, ensuring that relevant information is included in order to effectively place the proposal into context. Describe the idea and the proposed approach, with necessary sketches, graphics, and illustrations; emphasize why and how it is unique, innovative, and different from the existing solutions. Clearly and in detail describe:

- The idea, motivation/importance/relevance.
- How it will be executed/research plan.
- Challenge(s) and/or threat(s) that the proposed innovation is responding to.

Market Analysis - Provide information about your target market and early adopters. Explain how big the sector you are joining is and how you will position your company against others. Provide information about the others on the market, what they do, how they do what they do, what makes your company different, any product or services different from your competitors. Provide additional information about the market size, trends and future of the market you are joining.

Organization and Management - Provide information about the legal structure of your company. Explain how it will be managed and who will be in leadership roles. Please provide one-page CVs for the key players in your company. Tell your audience how your company will be structured and who will run it.

Marketing and Sales - Provide information about how you will sell your product, and the methods you are planning to follow to create/increase your sales.

Financial Projections - Provide specific information about required and available sources using below tables and describe how ISF will help your business and enhance it with your financial projections. Please share any available data: invoices, balance sheets or any other related items about your financial status. Design and explain your three-year financial forecast.

Required Resources and Justification - List of new resources that will be procured for this project.

Resources	Requested budget (QAR)	Justification	Procurement lead time
Personnel*			
Equipment			
Materials/Consumables			
Total			

*Non-FTE researchers (e.g., Postdocs, Research Assistants) can be co-funded by this grant. Entity will be required to share the cost of non-FTE hires.



- Business plans must not exceed 20 pages (font type/size and spacing: Calibri (body)/min. 10, single spaced).
- Certificate of Registration of the Company must be submitted with the application.
- Due to changing laws, regulations, markets, expectations and the nature of innovative technology itself, the Innovation Funds is authorized to provide flexibility in application and approval conditions to achieve HBKU's overall goals.
- Address all questions to: innovation@hbku.edu.qa.

HBKU ISF Eligibility

1. Only HBKU faculty members, scientists, researchers, and students who established a start-up are eligible to submit this application.
2. Only one submission is allowed for each start-up.
3. These HBKU students are eligible to participate: First year master's students; first, second-, and third-year PhD students; and first, second-, and third-year undergraduate students.
4. The business idea must be innovative and original, addressing relevant and critical local challenges. This should be clearly stated in the 'Executive Summary' and the relevant sections of the Business Plan.
5. No advising or mentoring is required from faculty, researchers, or staff members.
6. It is mandatory for the applicant to complete all sections listed in the Business Plan prior to submission. Incomplete applications will not be considered for review.
7. It is mandatory to submit the Certificate of Registration of the Company with the application.

HBKU ISF Selection Criteria

Compliance: Is the application and Business Plan submitted in line with the requested information? Incomplete applications will not be considered for review.

Novelty: In what ways is the solution or product offered under the Business Plan fundamentally different from existing ones? What is the overall innovation and merit of the product?

Value Creation and Impact: What is the potential of the business to create significant new value and impact on the market?

Relevance: In what ways is the business relevant to the future of Qatar? Who are the potential customers?

Feasibility: Is the proposed business plan doable within the given timeframe?

HBKU ISF Selection Process

The submitted Business Plans will be given an opportunity to be presented 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.

The following are essential reminders for applicants:

1. Selected Business Plans are subject to negotiations to include change(s) in the Business Plan details, projections, and terms and conditions, to be conducted by the HBKU Innovation Funds before finalizing the agreement and release of the funds.
2. Only selected awardees will be informed and announced.

HBKU ISF Budget Eligibility:

1. The LPI, PI and team members from HBKU will participate at zero cost (without additional compensation).
2. Equipment, materials, consumables for prototyping purposes
3. Hiring/Consultancy/Services
4. Exceptions are subject to approval by HBKU OIIR Executive Director.

HBKU ISF Award Management Terms and Conditions:

1. Once the selection process is finalized, all post-award activities will be managed and coordinated by the HBKU Innovation Funds Office through an official agreement with the awardees.
2. Project start date will be announced once an agreement is completed by the awardees.
3. Awardees are expected to present a written mid-term progress report and a final report.
4. 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 award can be withdrawn by the HBKU Innovation Funds based on the mid-term evaluations.
5. The awardees are expected to review and comply with all QF/HBKU policies including, but not limited to, research ethics, health and safety, intellectual property, and nondisclosure.

For questions and clarifications, please contact:
HBKU Office of Innovation and Industrial Relations (OIIR)
"Innovate to Lead"
innovation@hbku.edu.qa