

Addis Ababa University

**Office of the Vice President for Research and Technology
Transfer**

Policy and Guidelines on Research Incentives

2013

Policy on Research Incentives

1 Policy statement

It is of paramount importance that faculty members realize that writing research proposals, securing research grants, conducting research that is relevant to the development agenda of the country and publishing/disseminating the findings thereof, is not just secondary duty, but is affirmed as a major academic responsibility of every faculty. Generating new knowledge, or better understanding existing knowledge, is part and parcel of being an academic staff. It is equally important that the faculty of the University, not only keep abreast of research findings of other academicians, but that they also do their part in generating knowledge, leading discoveries, innovations and creativity and communicating the same to their peers and the wider public.

It is expected that faculty members respond best to incentives to encourage them to seek research grants and to be more engaged in funded research activities. Introducing appropriate incentive mechanisms will encourage and support academic staff to be fully engaged in basic and applied research within the context of the University and thus deter them from being preoccupied with outside activities to earn supplemental income. Of particular importance is the promotion of seeking and securing research funds from foreign and international institutions towards addressing national and local priorities, and publishing their findings in peer reviewed reputable publications. There is thus a felt need to put in place incentives for researchers to enhance their productivity, to acknowledge their significant contribution to the status and standing of AAU.

This policy document lays out the framework for a scheme that will acknowledge and reward researchers for their industriousness and productivity as well as create conducive situation that promotes active engagement in research. Under this scheme, faculty members may earn financial allowance to supplement their income or gain other tangible benefits through this policy, conditional to the eligibility and other provisions described herein.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Advance the University's mission of promoting active research
- Promote the engagement of faculty members in meaningful and relevant research with potential to impact national development
- Encourage faculty members to devote enough time to communicate their research findings to the scientific community and the general public
- Retain as well as attract accomplished scholars to the University

3.1. Research allowance

3.1.1 Eligibility

A full-time faculty member is eligible to participate and benefit from the research allowance described herein from one or more externally funded research projects.

3.1.2 Setting aside research allowance

Research allowance is only set aside on the condition that the entity that is providing funds for a proposed research project agrees to staff time research allowance and/or overhead cost that is levied by the University.

3.1.3 Staff-time research allowance

Faculty members are encouraged to include during project proposal preparation staff- time research-allowance for the PI and other participants of a research project up to USD 500.00 per month per person for the PI and up to USD 300 per month per person for other project participants during the lifetime of the project. .

3.1.4 Incentivizing research with a share of the project overhead

For projects that do not allow staff-time-research allowance, arrangements shall be made to incentivize project proposal writing and research by providing a share of the project overhead to researchers.

The overhead cost of a project shall be 12 % of the total fund of the project. A minimum of 8 % of the cost of the project or two-thirds (67 %) of the total overhead shall be allocated to the University while the rest one third (33%) of the overhead cost or about 4% of the total project cost shall be apportioned (set aside) for research allowance. This percentage shall not apply to annual research fund allocated to the University by the Government, nor does it apply retroactively on research projects where the University has already received funds.

The research allowance shall be considered 'set aside' once the overhead cost charged by the University is received and entered into its accounts.

3.1.5 Apportionment

The proportion of the allowance due to each member of the research team on each externally funded research project will reflect the level of involvement, engagement and responsibility. Where there is only one faculty member eligible to benefit from a set-aside research allowance, the entire research allowance will go to this single faculty member (see section 3.1.7 for restrictions). However, in cases where more than one faculty member is eligible, the following conditions shall apply subject to the restrictions outlined in section 3.1.7:

- a. where there are two Co-principal investigators (Co-PIs) that have been designated as such in the proposal submitted to the funding entity, then the two Co-PIs shall share the research allowance set aside in equal amounts or based on apportionment agreement entered into by the two Co-PIs *a priori*. There shall not be more than two Co-PIs on any one externally funded project.
- b. Where there are two or more faculty members involved in an externally funded research project and only one faculty member is a PI, then the PI will receive 60% of the research allowance set aside and the remaining 40% is apportioned equally among the remaining faculty members.
- c. Where there are two or more faculty members involved in an externally funded research project, and one faculty member is a PI and another is a Co-PI, then the PI will receive 45% of the research allowance set aside, the Co-PI will receive 25% and the remaining 30% is apportioned equally among the remaining faculty members.
- d. Where there are three or more faculty members involved in an externally funded research project, and two faculty members are listed as Co-PIs, then the Co-PIs will receive an equal share of 70% of the research allowance set aside and the remaining 30% is apportioned equally among the remaining faculty members

3.1.6 Disbursement

Disbursement of research allowance shall only be commenced once the external funds for the research project have been entered into the University accounts and that portion of the overhead cost has been earmarked for research allowance. The set aside research allowance shall be apportioned to eligible recipients of research allowance according to the criteria set forth in section 3.1.5 above.

The total research allowance set-aside shall be divided into the number of months (*i.e.* Ethiopian calendar salary months) extending over the life-time of the research project to compute the monthly research allowance that will be disbursed to eligible faculty members. Eligible faculty members shall receive that portion of the research due to them on a monthly basis contemporaneous with the payment of basic monthly salary.

Where the entity provides the external research fund in installments, only that portion of the funds secured and in the accounts of the University as against the duration of time until the next installment will be the basis for computing the monthly research incentive allowance.

In the event that funding for a research project is terminated by the sponsoring entity, the research allowance shall also terminate.

A faculty member who elects to receive the research allowance not as private income but as research subsidy can request the allowance to be deposited in a research account. The University shall then deposit in a research account, in the name of the researcher, an amount

1.5 times the research allowance. Such funds can be used to cover travel costs, purchase of consumables or small equipment such as laptops, ipads, etc. which shall remain property of the University.

3.1.7 Restrictions

Should a faculty member who was eligible to receive a monthly research allowance but ceases to satisfy the eligibility criteria for any reason, s/he will discontinue receiving that portion of the research allowance balance remaining: nor will the remaining balance be re-apportioned among the eligible faculty members that are still engaged in the research project. However another faculty member who satisfies the eligibility criteria set forth herein and joins the research team as replacement may receive a monthly research allowance.

Allowance from one externally funded research project should not exceed twice the basic monthly salary of the recipient. Where the computed amount of monthly research allowance from one research project due to an eligible faculty member exceeds twice her/his monthly basic salary, the monthly research allowance shall be capped at twice the basic salary, and the difference shall revert back to the University as overhead cost.

Where the computed amount of monthly research allowances from multiple research projects due to an eligible faculty member exceed her/his three month basic salary, the monthly research allowance shall be capped at the three month basic salary. The difference thereof shall revert back to the University as overhead cost.

Where the external research fund is secured in foreign currency, the official exchange rate at the time of the disbursement of the first monthly research allowance shall prevail for the life time of the research project.

3.1.8 Compliance

In recognition that the research allowance scheme is designed to encourage faculty members to engage in active research programs, the academic unit in which the PI is housed has the duty to evaluate and report the compliance to the progress of the research project. Where co-PIs from different academic units are supervising the research project, compliance shall be conducted through a joint evaluation.

Compliance evaluation shall be conducted annually at the end of the Ethiopian fiscal year (*i.e. Senie 30*) and should be completed and reported to the Office of VP-Research and Technology Transfer within one month of start of the new fiscal year.

Deficiency in sufficient progress in the research project or abrogation to the terms of the external funding entity may result in suspension of the monthly research allowance of all faculty members engaged in a research project as deemed appropriate by the Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer or another duly authorized body.

4 Publication allowance

4.1 Faculty members, who publish research articles in recognized reputable journals, publish books that emanate from research or textbooks shall be rewarded with a publication allowance, if and when financial circumstances of the University allow the same. The publication allowances shall follow the following scheme.

4.1.1 The publication allowance for journal articles shall take into consideration the **Impact Factor** of the journal (as determined by ISI Web of Knowledge) for the year prior to the print publication of the paper as well as the relevance of the research area towards the nation's development agenda.

4.1.2 The payment for an article published in an international journal published outside Ethiopia shall be set as a multiple of the **impact factor** and Birr 20,000. Thus for an article that has appeared in a journal with an impact factor of 0.5, the publication allowance shall be Birr 10,000, provided the content of the article has relevance to national development.

4.1.3 For national journals the office of the Research Director shall issue a relative status of reputability based on the score of the particular journal on the set criteria of reputability. The office shall determine **Reputability Status** of national journals in such a way that journals that satisfy only the minimum requirements shall have a Reputability Status of 0.5 while journals that fulfill all the requirements for reputability shall have a value of 1.0, while those in between shall have values between 0.5 and 1.0. The payment for an article in a local journal with a **Reputability Status** of 1.0 shall be Birr 10,000.

4.1.4 The maximum that will be paid for one publication shall not exceed Birr 20,000 and in any given year Birr 25,000 shall be the maximum remuneration to be paid to a faculty member.

4.1.5 Books published after a rigorous peer review process by a reputable publisher as a product of original research or chapters in edited books or textbooks shall be

rewarded. Author(s) of a book who are eligible faculty members shall be rewarded with Birr 12,000. The Office of Research has the responsibility to ascertain the rigor of the peer review process and that the contribution to knowledge of the presented book is at least equivalent to one research article.

4.1.6 A textbook authored by a faculty member and accepted as designated text for a particular course by an academic unit shall be rewarded with Birr 15,000.

4.2 Apportionment of publication allowance

The proportion of the publication allowance due to each author of an article, a multi-authored book, or textbook will reflect the level of involvement, engagement and responsibility in generating the publication.

4.2.1 Where a publication is solo authored by a faculty member, the entire publication allowance will go to this single faculty member (see section 3.2.2.3 for restrictions/exceptions).

4.2.2 A faculty member who is the first/lead author of a paper shall receive 70% of the publication allowance, when the rest of the co-authors are not faculty members.

4.2.3 A faculty member who is the first/lead author of a paper that is coauthored also by other faculty members, the lead author shall receive 60% of the publication allowance, with the other eligible authors equally sharing the remaining 40%.

4.2.4 Where the lead author is not a faculty member, then eligible co-author(s) shall share 60% of the publication allowance.

4.2.5 Where a publication emanates from a thesis/dissertation research project, the advisor of the postgraduate research who is a faculty member shall receive 60% of the publication allowance, other eligible authors equally sharing the remaining 40%. When there are more than one faculty advisors, the share of the advisors shall be 70%, which shall be shared equally.

For any publication allowance to be paid Addis Ababa University must be the stated author affiliation listed for the publication all.

A faculty member who elects to receive the publication allowance not as private income but as research subsidy can request the allowance to be deposited in a research account. The University shall then deposit in a research account, in the name of the researcher, an amount twice the publication allowance. Such funds can be used to cover travel costs, purchase of consumables or small equipment such as laptops, ipads, etc. which shall remain property of the University.

4.3 Restrictions/exceptions

Eligible faculty members may only receive publication allowance for a paper that appeared in print in a reputable journal as determined by the authorized body or office. Publications submitted, being reviewed, or “in press” do not qualify. For papers that appear in journals that are not rated for their impact factor, provided that the value of the paper and its relevance is rated positively by the department and the Office of the Research an impact factor of 0.25 may be assumed.

Short communications, abstracts, reviews, *etc.* that fall short of a full length article will not be considered for publication allowance.

The publication allowance as described herein does not extend to eligible beneficiaries not affiliated with the University at the time of print publication of paper. The proportion of publication allowance due to an eligible beneficiary that is no longer affiliated with the University shall not be re-apportioned to the remaining authors.

Eligible beneficiaries from publication allowance as outlined in this policy must submit an application within six months of the date of the publication appearing in print or online, otherwise, the eligible authors forfeit the publication allowance due.

4.5 Compliance

The authorized body or office is duty bound to make reasonable effort to ensure compliance with this policy element. The items that need to be periodically evaluated and updated are, but not limited to, the following:

- a current list of reputable journals that are updated annually
- select and maintain the most appropriate unbiased impact factor of journals of the previous Gregorian calendar year
- a current list of the nations priority areas of research
- the contribution of other potential authors is not disregarded
- the publication under consideration is an original work and that the work or a significant part of it has not been previously published
- the work is free from plagiarism, ethical lapses, *etc.*

5 Guiding principles

- *Industriousness*
- *Freedom of inquiry*
- *Scholarship*
- *Creativity/innovativeness*
- *Flexibility*
- *Pursuit of truth*
- Freedom of expression of truth

- Competitiveness
- Recognition of merit

6 Responsible Body

The Director of Research will be directly responsible for the implementation of this policy. The Vice-President for Research and Technology Transfer shall provide clarifications on the policy. The ultimate responsibility for interpretation of the policy rests with the AAU Senate.

7 Pertinent legislation

This policy is consistent with the Constitution of FDR, the Higher Education Proclamation no. 650/2009 and Senate Legislation of AAU.

8 Miscellaneous

Amendment, documentation, dissemination and policy monitoring shall be governed by relevant provisions of the 'policy on policies and procedures'.