



KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

KNUST RESEARCH FUND (KREF)

GENERAL CONDITIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR AWARD ADMINISTRATION

SEPTEMBER, 2021

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1. Introduction

The KNUST Research Fund (KReF) exist to provide internal source of funding support for cutting-edge research that address specific societal problems. The aim is to encourage faculty members to be more innovative in identifying and conceptualizing research projects with readily implementable outputs for uptake.

KReF is administered by the Office of Grants and Research (OGR) on behalf of the Vice Chancellor of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). It is the responsibility of OGR to provide strategic direction for the effective administration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of KReF in line with the University's research policy. The OGR is responsible for the application, review and award processes of KReF.

The conditions described in this document are intended to inform and guide Principal Investigators and all stakeholders about the requirements of KReF in terms of project implementation, fund disbursement and management, reporting, monitoring and evaluation of outputs and outcomes.

Any inquiries regarding the administration of KReF may be directed to OGR at ogr@knust.edu.gh or +233 0322062184/5

2. Award Type

The KNUST Research Fund has two categories of award namely;

- a) **Seed:** small pilot or exploratory research projects focusing on exploring the feasibility of new research approaches, allowing investigators to collect preliminary data to subsequently develop major grant applications, or for completing short-term research studies.
- b) **Multi-disciplinary:** collaborative research projects that address specific national development issue and capable of shaping or influencing policy and practice in Ghana and towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Each award shall be led by a lead researcher (Principal Investigator) who must be a staff of KNUST and who will also serve as the budget holder at the respective College.

3. Duration of Award

The KNUST Research Fund award is granted for a period not exceeding 12 months. A PI may request for a No-Cost-Extension (NCE) of up to six (6) months to enable them complete all project activities. A NCE application shall be submitted to the Director of OGR no later than 3 months prior to the original end date of the project. The NCE application may be granted after an evaluation by OGR and shall be at no additional cost to KReF. A further extension of this period may not be granted.

4. Allowable Cost

As a capacity building grant for KNUST researchers, the KReF award is intended to provide direct funding support for research activities and not necessarily for time inputs or salaries for staff on the project nor stipend for students. The following costs are allowable under KReF;

- ✚ **Research Materials and Supplies** - includes laboratory equipment, books, softwares samples, research consumables and other material support for postgraduate students.
- ✚ **Travel and Fieldwork**- include cost of fuel, field accommodation, per diems, hiring of vehicles, allowance for field assistants and enumerators.
- ✚ **Small Tools and Equipment** – include cost of small research tools, recorders, cameras and ICT equipment.
- ✚ **Meetings and Workshops Cost** - cost of meals during workshop, stationery, and venue
- ✚ **Communication and Dissemination**- journal publications, media coverage and other dissemination activities.

Indirect cost or overhead cannot be charged on KReF award as it is an internally generated fund.

5. Fund Disbursement

Upon granting of the award, funds will be released to the College of the Principal Investigator (PI). The PI shall be the grant holder, and shall request for and account for funds through the College accounting processes. The disbursement of the funds shall be in two instalments as follows:

- ✚ 50% of funds shall be released upon award of the Grant;
- ✚ 50% upon submission and approval of the mid-term (progress) report.

To access the first tranche, the PI shall make an official request to the Provost of the College through the Director of OGR. The Director of OGR after evaluation of the request, shall forward it to the respective College Provosts for further processing and release of funds to the PI. Similarly, a PI may request for the second tranche after the submission and approval of progress report by the Director of OGR. It is the responsibility of the PI to;

- ✚ Ensure efficient use of grant funds as specified in the approved grant proposal
- ✚ Maintain all records to show and account for the use of grant funds
- ✚ Allow KNUST Auditors unlimited access to project records to verify grant activities and expenditure
- ✚ Repay any portion of the funds not used for the specified purposes

6. Project Implementation

In implementing the approved research project, Principal Investigators are required to;

- ✚ Use the reviewer comments attached to improve your approved research proposal;
- ✚ Obtain relevant ethical approval for your research;
- ✚ Involve all team members and external partners indicated in the your proposal
- ✚ Complete the KReF Implementation Plan (Appendix I) and use it as a guide for the implementation of your award

- ✚ Continuously monitor and ensure strict compliance with the project goals and objectives in accordance with the KREF framework and
- ✚ Complete the project within the stated duration on the award letter.

7. Monitoring & Reporting

- ✚ The Principal Investigator is required to submit a half-year **Progress Report** and a **Completion Report** to the Director of OGR with copies to the Provosts and the KReF Scientific Committee member of their College (see Appendix II & III for reporting templates).
- ✚ The Progress report shall be submitted within six-months upon receipt of the award. The report must detail the progress and results achieved within the period.
- ✚ The Final/Completion report shall be submitted no later than 3 months after the end date of the award.
- ✚ Financial reporting must be prepared using the KReF Reporting Template (See Appendix)
- ✚ It is the responsibility of the PI to inform OGR immediately about any unforeseen circumstances that may have significant impact on the approved project including any changes in the project team members or external partners.

8. Expected Outputs

The expected outputs of KReF include but not limited to;

- ✚ Scaled up research projects
- ✚ Publications in peer-reviewed journals
- ✚ Policy briefs
- ✚ Postgraduate thesis
- ✚ Business set up
- ✚ Inventions
- ✚ Patents
- ✚ Other external grants proposal/ award
- ✚ Stakeholder dissemination meetings

9. Non-Compliance and Termination of Grant

- ✚ Non-compliance is deemed to occur if the PI fails to fulfil all the conditions outlined in the KReF framework as defined in this document. These include;
- ✚ Failure to submit appropriate progress and financial reports
- ✚ Spending project funds on unapproved activities, non-allowable items or outside the approved budget
- ✚ Lack of progress towards the planned objectives for a period of time exceeding 6-9 months
- ✚ Submission of the approved research project to another funding agency without the approval of KREF.

In the event of non-compliance, KNUST is entitled to take appropriate action against the PI with the view of limiting the consequences of the violation. A written reprimand shall be issued to the PI requesting the violation to be remedied within a grace period.

If the PI fails to remedy the non-compliance within the grace period, KNUST holds the right to discontinue funding, revoke the award and claim repayment of already disbursed funds. This may be followed by an investigation, financial audit, suspension of further disbursement, reimbursement of funds and termination of the award. In the event of financial loss or termination of award, the PI shall be surcharged and the Finance Officer authorised to recoup any debts from the PI's monthly salary and other accrued entitlements.

Before a possible termination, all parties are obliged to seek to resolve conflicts through negotiation. Unresolved conflicts cannot be brought before a court, but must be resolved through arbitration.

10. Intellectual Property Rights

The right to all outputs from the KReF research project shall be in accordance with the KNUST Intellectual Property Policy. Principal Investigators must ensure that KReF is duly acknowledged in all publications emanating from their KReF research project.

11. Appendices

Appendix I: KREF Implementation Plan Template

Appendix II: KREF Progress Report Template

Appendix III: KReF Completion Report Template