



# Request For Proposals

Saudi Centers Of Research Excellence (SCORE)





## Contents

Introduction.....	1
Defining Excellence Centers Project.....	2
Objectives of Excellence Centers.....	2
Functions of Research Excellence Centers:.....	3
Features of Research Excellence Centers :.....	3
Responsibilities of Research Excellence Centers:.....	4
Conditions of Establishing Excellence Centers:.....	4
Specifications of Excellence Centers:.....	5
Factors Crucial to Success of Excellence Centers:.....	5
Examples of Fields and Specializations of Excellence Centers:.....	6
Criteria of Evaluating Proposals and Bases of Preference:.....	6
Requirements of Proposal:.....	7
Methods of Preparing a Proposal of an Excellence Center:.....	8
First: The Method of Writing and Preparation.....	8
Second : Contents of Proposal.....	9
Handing Proposals.....	10






## Introduction

A research excellence center is a characteristic granted to a university unit of a quality tangible research achievement that adds a higher status to the university compared to its counterparts. Excellence centers usually emerge in universities around fields of research excellence in these universities.

A research excellent center usually has a nucleus that starts a specialization or a scientific field that distinguishes the university through the specialized teaching staff who are active and interested in the field. A center usually comprises more than one specialization, depending on what is called interdisciplinary specializations. It also has connections and communication with similar departments and bodies inside and outside university. A center gains prominence in a certain field and has applications whether in industry, commerce or practical life in general.

Establishing excellence centers at universities usually starts with setting up what is called Collaborative Research Centers that begins with an initiative by a number of the teaching staff and researchers at university hoping that they may transfer into an excellence center later in case of fulfilling its conditions and requirements. Collaborative Research Centers are viewed as promising excellence centers that need a certain period of time to develop and transfer into reliable research excellence centers. Most important of its requirements are as follows :

-  Interdisciplinary research programs.
-  A good list of scientific research products.
-  Research relations with other research centers or distinguished researchers .

As regards funding given by the sponsoring institution of the excellence center, most centers receive external financial support by big companies or government and non-government institutions concerned with supporting and developing research. As for the administrative system of centers, it often resembles that followed in research centers or scientific departments. Though these centers are wholly or partially financed by general or private sectors or both of them, they belong to the university that comprises them.



## Defining Excellence Centers Project:

The Ministry of Higher Education aims at, through this project, supporting already existing centers of excellence or establishing them at Saudi universities in various specializations and fields with a view to highlighting strengths and fields of distinguishment, giving care and crystallizing them in academic research centers that take the lead both on the national and regional levels. The Ministry of Higher Education implores the Saudi Universities to submit proposals to support already existing research excellence centers or establishing new research excellence centers that may attain the following general objectives in the long and short term:

## Objectives of Excellence Centers:

- Pioneering and leadership in serving the specialization locally and regionally.
- Contributing to supporting and developing research potentials and professional activities in the specialization.
- Initiating necessary research activities and projects that consolidate the role of the center and keep it in the lead.
- Providing all possible help to the institutions in need of the experience, scientific and research potentials of the center.
- Encouraging various specializations and linking them in order to develop new methods of different technologies.
- Enhancing partnership between researchers and scientists and government and private institutions to create advanced technologies.
- Creating a suitable atmosphere to help researchers arrive at creative solutions for specific projects

## Functions of Research Excellence Centers:

Among the most important functions of excellence centers are :

- Building a distinguished research and scientific database representing a nucleus for a specialized advanced research center.

- Putting scientific research into optimum practice in the field of specialization.
- Coordinating, training and qualifying specialized and competitive human resources.
- Enhancing teaching in both general and university education.
- Facilitating communication and harmony between academic and practical experience.

### Features of Research Excellence Centers :

- Teaching staff and researchers focus on conducting specialized research in the area of excellence of the center.
- Research results should be of interest to eminent publishers via publishing them in venerable world periodicals related to the specialization of the center.
- Forming a network for communication with others and partnership with the units identical in purpose, vocation and activities.
- Boosting relevant robust instructional programs particularly those related to postgraduate studies.

### Responsibilities of Research Excellence Centers:

- Maintaining and enhancing research capabilities, upgrading professionalism and research programs relevant to center specialization.
- Undertaking activities or other projects supporting relevant research.

### Conditions of Establishing Excellence Centers:

Among the most important conditions of establishing a research excellence center are the following:

1. electing minor specialization for the center to focus on , providing that there is no similar center in the research excellence center program mentioned below:

- **Research Excellence Center in Environmental Studies.**
- **Research Excellence Center in Medical Genome**
- **Research Excellence Center in Engineering Materials**
- **Research Excellence Center in Biotechnology.**



- **Research Excellence Center in Petroleum Refinement and Petrochemicals.**
  - **Research Excellence Center in Renewable Energy**
  - **Research Excellence Center in Palms and Dates.**
  - **Research Excellence Center in Pilgrimage and Umra.**
2. Determining the research field and area of application, associated specializations and identifying basic topics the center can organize activities and research around.
  3. Identifying a vocation for the center that corresponds to the objectives of the institution and defining goals that are easy to achieve.
  4. Adopting criteria and indicators of success to be used as a guide for the establishment of the center or its continuation if it is already existing and practicing its scientific and research activities.
  5. Clarifying its experiences in the field of cooperation with distinguished institutions and supported with academicians of vast experiences locally and worldwide.
  6. Availability of basic research, laboratory and informatics equipment that can help researchers skillfully perform entrusted tasks.
  7. Strong support of higher administration of the sponsoring institution based on complete contention of the vocation of the center and its role in the service of specific scientific research in a vital area for the community and the whole country.
  8. Details of the organization of the center including the nature of the relationship with the sponsoring universities and partners of other universities and other local and international research and scientific institutions. This also involves private sector and government institutions.

### Specifications of Excellence Centers:

Specifications of Excellence Centers are made clear through the examples of centers existing around the world, which differ according to the nature of the center's work. As soon as we state the vocation of the center, it is necessary to set goals and strategies that ensure the success of its vocation and performance of its role. A set of short and long term goals are usually laid. Goals and objectives should correspond with the vocation of the center and be clearly stated and made known to researchers and officials concerned.

## Factors Crucial to the Success of Excellence Centers:

- Availability of highly competent human resources, insightful administration of the center, and a distinguished group of researchers capable of specific research contribution.
- Ensuring effectiveness of procedures and clarity of responsibilities by forming a small administrative committee consisting of a group of scientists and teaching staff submitting the proposal of establishing the center, members representing other universities and representatives of national and international institutions and organizations participating in developing higher education. The administrative committee is in charge of ensuring the highest scientific world competitive criteria in the center, trends and strategic plan of the center.
- The administrative committee appoints a distinguished teaching staff in the field to supervise and manage the center.
- On setting specifications of the excellence center, it is necessary to identify elements, equipment and instructional resources required.

## Examples of Fields and Specializations of Excellence Centers:

Excellence Centers at universities are usually established in fields these universities are known for in research and scientific consultancy with focus on innovating and using certain techniques. Excellence could be in functional or applied fields taking for granted the adequacy of all university excellence centers to the culture , capabilities and communities of quality research institution.

Among the suggested specializations of excellence centers in Saudi Universities are :

- Water
- Technology of discovering natural resources and exploiting them economically.
- Transport and traffic.
- Islamic economy .
- Medical and drugs technology.
- And other different specializations.



## Criteria of Evaluating Proposals and Bases of Preference:

All proposals of excellence centers submitted will be evaluated and preferred according to the following criteria :

1. Quality, clarity and fulfilling all conditions and requirements of the technical proposal submitted.
2. Feasibility and opportunity of success of the center, manifested in the strength of partnership and participation between interdisciplinary specializations, personnel and institutions.
3. Effectiveness of the center and the outcomes expected from its research and scientific activities and their reflections on dealing with local and national issues.
4. The way and the extent of the center contribution to achieving the objectives of the instructional institution it belongs to and those of the ministry of higher education in general.
5. Quantity and quality of research and practical applications.
6. Detailed plan of managing the center and supervising its activities and research.
7. Experience of management and supervision team.
8. Previous and present experiences and activities in the field of research excellence such as winning local, regional or international prizes.
9. Reality of cost and justifications.
10. Numerousness of opportunities and channels of supporting the center and its activities in order to ensure its quality and continuity.
11. Amount of support shared by the sponsoring institution to the center.

## Requirements of Proposal:

The proposal should include the following :

1. Vision and mission of the center.
2. Definite and real objectives.
3. The administrative and operating plan of the center.
4. The importance of the center and the changes expected by its establishment.

5. A framework and examples of the center activities include, and not confined to:
- Training programs previously presented or planned to be presented.
  - Workshops previously presented or planned to be presented in the field of the center specialization.
  - International and regional conferences sponsored or planned to be sponsored by the center.
  - Scholarships allocated or planned to be allocated for researchers in the field of the research excellence of the center.
6. A list of the members of the research team representing the nucleus of the center.
7. A list of the centers or the local, regional and international scientific and research institutions cooperating with or providing experience to the center.
8. A framework and an outline of the center and its equipment and needs.
9. Criteria and indicators of the centers success in realizing its vocation and implementing its plan.
10. Estimated cost of establishing the center or expanding its current activities if existing ( not including construction or buildings).
11. Setting a detailed plan to the way of making use of required funding which is tabled to the time of support.
12. World models of excellence centers in the field or similar fields.

## Methods of Preparing a Proposal of an Excellence Center:

### **First: The Method of Writing and Preparation**

1. Proposal of the Project is to be submitted in English and Arabic.
2. Times New Roman font size 12 is to be used with a single space for proposals submitted in English and the Naskh font size 18 for those submitted in Arabic.
3. The report is to be submitted typed on A4 paper of five bound copies and the original in addition to an electronic copy.
4. Page numbers are to be inserted at the center of page bottom.



## Second : Contents of Proposal

1. Cover.
2. Title page.
3. Introduction.
4. Abstract in Arabic(not more than 300 words).
5. Abstract in English (not more than 300 words).
6. Table of contents.
7. A list of the first three names of staff in charge of the center, their academic ranks and their post titles at the center.
8. A list of names of permanent researchers at the center, their academic ranks and the institutions they belong to.
9. A list of names of cooperative researchers at the center , their academic ranks and the institutions they belong to.
10. Human and financial resources currently available at the center.
11. An introduction dealing with the general framework of the center excellence field, with focus on the following points:
  - Importance of the field work of the center on both national and regional levels.
  - Reviewing literature in the field of the center excellence.
  - Determining goals and objectives of the center.
  - Current real strengths .
  - Expected strengths in case of making required funds available.
  - Description of tasks and system of the center.
  - Determining activities of the center.
  - Human resources and its development.
  - Time-table of implementing tasks of the center.
  - The most updated research relevant to the specialization of the center.

12. Plan of work to be adopted by the center to realize its suggested objectives, including the following :
    - Role of staff in charge of the center administratively and scientifically.
    - Role of permanent researchers.
    - Role of cooperative researchers.
    - Time-table of other activities of the center (scientific meetings, workshops, training courses...etc.).
  13. Scientific and research topics selected for work and the reasons of selecting them.
  14. Problems expected to be encountered by the center, the methods of overcoming them and the role of the ministry to solve them.
  15. A list of appendices and references relied on to prepare this project.
  16. Curriculum vitae of the suggested supervising and administrative team members of the center.
  17. Budget and financial support including details of estimated cost and its justifications (to be submitted separately).
  18. Names of five local and international jury members in the field of the center specialization
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## HANDING PROPOSALS

**Proposals are to be sent and all inquiries directed to:**

Ministry of Higher Education

Educational Affairs

Saudi Centers Of Research Excellence (SCORE)

T e l : +966 (01) 4410893

Fax : +966 (01) 4415555 Ext. 337

Email: [score@mohe.gov.sa](mailto:score@mohe.gov.sa)



# H A N D I N G P R O P O S A L S

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