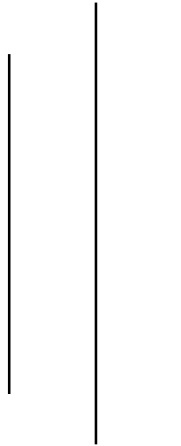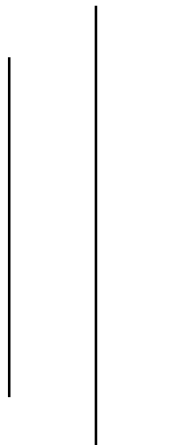# UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

NURTURING EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM (NEHEP)

(2021/22 – 2025/26)

STANDARDS, OPERATIONAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES
FOR
COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS

APRIL, 2022

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PART I - COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Abbreviations and acronyms

ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
CoI	Co-Investigator
GFR	Government Funded Research
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HERP	Higher Education Reforms Project
IAC	Industry-academia collaboration
Intra-UC	Intra-university collaboration
Inter-UC	Inter-university collaboration
NEHEP	Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program
NGR	Non-governmental organizations funded academic research
PI	Principal Investigator
RMC	Research Management Cell
SHEP	Second Higher Education Project
SOPG	Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines
TNC	Trans-national collaboration
UGC	University Grants Commission

Section I: Introduction

1.1. Background

Government of Nepal is currently in the process of accomplishing the targets set in its Fifteenth Five-Year Plan, National Education Policy-2019 (NEP-2019) and Science, Technology and Innovation Policy-2019 (STI Policy-2019). This Plan with policies envisages to promote technical education with a special focus on skill-based education and training, and to promote the culture of research and collaboration. The Fifteenth Plan targets to increase the ratio of research and development expenditure to GDP up to 1.0% by 2023 from the value of 0.3% (2018/19). The policy No. 10.22 of the NEP-2019 document and its sub policies stress that research and innovation should be an integral component of the higher education. The policy envisions to have a compulsory system for research publication. Innovation will be promoted through legal, institutional and practical reforms. In addition, the STI Policy-2019 aims to promote scientific research by employing the art technologies and qualified human resources. It focuses on collaboration among HEIs, research academies, and industries. Accordingly, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are expected to function as education hub and innovation centers in the country. HEIs should maximize research impact by introducing research based academic programs, quality publications, and market-driven product development both at national and international levels.

The University Grants Commission (UGC), as envisioned in its Act 2050 (1993 AD), is to support research activities in universities in Nepal. This support is an integral part of enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education in the country. Since its inception, UGC has been providing several grants, including Ph. D and M Phil fellowships to faculty and young students. Faculties of different campuses and universities receive support grants, mini-research grants, collaborative research grants and travel grants. Similarly, research students receive thesis support grants. Likewise, institutions are offered support funds for trainings and seminar – workshops, grants for Research Management Cells (RMCs), among others. The UGC has also been supporting activities related to research and quality of education in the country's higher education institutions.

The Second Higher Education Project (SHEP), 2007-2014, the World Bank –supported major reform initiative of the Government of Nepal helped enhance the capacity of the UGC as well as expand research activities of faculty members and students in higher education institutions. The UGC has established the Research Division as a permanent functional entity for facilitating policy formulation and management of its research support and fellowship programs. The SHEP research support aimed at improving quality of higher education teaching and learning practices by substantiating research culture in the university education system, and thus, making higher education more relevant to national needs and priorities.

Higher Education Reforms Project (HERP 2015-2020) further helped HEIs strengthen the research activities. The major objectives of the HERP were systemic/institutional reforms; improving quality, relevance and efficiency of higher education; supporting underprivileged students for equitable access; and promoting research, innovation and academic excellence.

Drawing on the experience and outcomes of the SHEP and HERP, the current Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program (NEHEP) 2021-2026 has undertaken four major areas for reform:

- Improved Labor-market relevance, Entrepreneurship, and Collaborative Research
- Strengthening Governance and Financing of Higher Education
- Widening Access to Quality Higher Education for Disadvantaged Students
- Extending Digitization of Higher Education

The funding of the NEHEP is based on six important disbursement linked indicators (DLIs). DLI # 2 focuses on collaborative research and entrepreneurship program. Collaborative research and entrepreneurship should address the aspiration of higher education for high impact on the national economy. This SOPG outlines the standards, operational policies and guidelines for UGC to promote collaborative research through all eligible public institutions and through private institutions by forming partnership with public institutions.

1.2 Objectives of Research Funding

The UGC supported Research Programs aim at promoting research, development and innovation through research funding to HEIs, the faculty and students as well as strengthening research infrastructure of HEIs in the country envisioned in the National Education Policy-2019. It also draws on the objectives of the National Higher Education Program (Framework) (2021-2030), which is also being supported by the Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program (2021-2026), and the national developmental priorities outlined in the Fifteenth Plan.

The UGC research funds are directed to reinforce opportunities for academic programs and research initiatives on relevant and appropriate fields and disciplines. Supporting the faculty and institutions financially along with required expertise and resources helps campuses/colleges and universities maintain research–based higher education. Moreover, these institutions can prepare trained scholars and researchers competent in policy making, knowledge production and dissemination who shall ultimately serve the nation and the entire world. It can further strengthen the research capacity development, inculcation of investigative and inquisitive academic culture in higher education institutions and increase in research output.

The National Higher Education Program (Framework) (2021-2030) and the UGC Sustainability Plan for Research Funding in Higher Education (2021-2024) stress on identifying and developing research, innovation and academic programs in the areas of national priorities and potential for excellence. The Fifteenth Plan envisions innovative human capital for social and economic transformation through higher education that is made accessible, competitive and research oriented with an increased investment in science, technology and research, capacity development, and collaboration between universities, industries and research institutions, in-country and globally.

In addition to national research programs envisioned in Sustainability Plan for Research in Higher Education (2021-2024), the NEHEP will enhance collaborative research and innovation with industry partners, building on the achievements of the previous operation. The program will provide **competitive collaborative research** funding for selected HEIs, schools, central

departments, and centers of excellence (COE) for collaborative research with priorities on STEM with a revised regulatory framework.

1.3 UGC-focused frontiers for collaborative research and innovation grant

Following the Education, Science, Technology and Innovation Policies 2019, and the Fifteenth Five Year Plan of Nepal, the UGC has identified certain themes and areas based on: (i) national interest and (ii) global trend. These themes and areas are listed hereunder:[1]

- Development and prosperity
- Green, resilient and inclusive development
- Sustainable development goals (SDGs)
- High-performance (smart) materials and products
- Climate change adaptation and Environment
- Social inclusion and gender equity
- Population dynamics and human mobility
- Indigenous knowledge development
- Digital landscape development

1.4 Focus on collaborative research and innovation grant

Global trend indicates that this is the age of collaborative research. Faculties and other researchers can collaborate in many ways. Collaboration stands for a wide scope in which individual, academic institutions, public institutions and/or private institutions work together to address research problems that would otherwise be difficult for an institution working alone. Based on need assessment for research support as deemed by the UGC, it will provide differential support to the various dimensions of collaboration. The commonly practiced categories of collaborations are discussed hereunder.

1.4.1 Industry-academia collaboration

This alliance covers any collaboration related to production, process or service industries, trades or professions. Profit-making institutions or those registered under the company act (2006 AD) are classified as industry for this classification purpose. Industries can be either the publicly owned businesses or private companies. Currently, three types of industry-academia collaborative research are flourishing in Nepal.

1.4.1.1 Industry as a facility-provider

The second and more pertinent aspect to Nepal at present is such that public/private industries have various laboratory facilities and industrial systems that the universities can utilize for the better exposure of its faculties and students. Companies that are exemplary can act as a facilitator. Some private companies have begun exemplary work by engaging various scientists and state-of-the-art equipment.

1.4.1.2 Industry as a research partner

The first and the typical aspect of industry-academia collaboration is such that industries provide funds to conduct applied research directly linked to problem-solving, development or expansion of the industry.

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[1] An explanation of these themes is presented in Annex I. These themes are indicative and not exhaustive for the UGC to extend the collaborative research grant.

1.4.1.3 Industry as a researcher

In this category, industry partners will provide their employees to join as a researcher to the research team. This collaboration helps concerned authorities transfer knowledge and skills between participating industries and universities.

1.4.2 Inter-university collaboration

Two or more universities, including domestic and selected foreign universities can form a partnership to conduct a specific research work or a series of studies. Such partnerships may be at the level of universities, departments, units or research staff. The partnership may be on equal or unequal footing. In some cases, fund may flow from one to the other. In some other cases, participating institutions may conduct research from their internal fund. Yet, the coalition may receive research fund from external sources, in other cases.

1.4.3 Intra-university and inter-disciplinary collaboration

In the leading academic institutions in the world, boundaries between various departments have been gradually reduced. Instead of traditional departments, new research areas are evolving at the intersection of such traditional departments such as biomedical engineering, environment science, counseling psychology, executive management, and international relations. In that sense, collaboration of engineers with virologists, for example, in the development of swab collection facilities and isolation services to combat Covid-19 sounds unconventional. Digital marketing will require collaboration between researchers from information technology field as well as from marketing field. Further, hospitals were traditionally operated by doctors-turned-into-managers; however, a new profession of hospital management has been evolving in recent years. This field requires a collaboration of professionals from health and management sectors. Rather than the expertise or process involved, outcomes are considered the bond of collaboration. Moreover, some of the sectors such as environment and hydrology are largely cross-cutting, and thus, requiring collaboration of experts on water, air, ecology, forest, and geology. In today's world, those who collaborate with other disciplines are likely to make more research impacts and to achieve major breakthroughs.

1.4.4 Trans-national collaboration

Some of the research subjects are so broad that they require wide spatial distribution involving various countries. For instance, the clinical trial of a Covid-19 vaccine required trials to be conducted in various countries. Environmental effect and climate change appear at the global level and hence a global environmental study would warrant a collaboration across various nations. An HEI from Nepal may participate in an already ongoing project or may serve as a dot in a long chain of trans-national collaboration for a component. Despite being a component of a trans-national project, the Nepali component can be formulated as a stand-alone project led by a principal investigator in Nepal.

1.4.5 Government-funded academic research[2]

Government institutions may sometimes sponsor research programs and projects aimed at some specific solutions to a pertinent problem or to develop new products, processes or services. Examples include research funds through National Planning Commission and Nepal Academy of Science and Technology for specific objectives. Sub-national governments in Nepal in the federal structure have also begun to fund academic research.

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[2] Grants directly provided through government budgetary system will not be regarded as a collaboration between the government and the receiving academic institution merely because of the relationship established by the grant.

1.4.6 Non-governmental organizations funded academic research

International non-governmental organizations, and national non-governmental institutions sometimes join hands with academic institutions by opening funding opportunities for various academic research projects.

1.5 Guiding Principles of Research Funding

The guiding principles of research funding are presented in Table 1. UGC has adopted international standards for research funding. These funding policies are based on scientific merit review-2018. UGC employs the following set of principles in selection, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of research support programs. These principles are based on statement of principles on scientific merit review-2018 endorsed by Global Research Council on Global Summit on Scientific Merit Review held on 2018 as well as in national policies of the Government and practices at UGC.

Table 1: Guiding Principles of Research Funding

SN	Guiding Principles	Descriptions
		A. General
1	Standard of Research	A research is a scientifically designed and planned study carried out within an institutional framework and support, conducted or supervised by an investigator or a team of investigators with adequate knowledge about the subject of research and relevant regulatory issues, and training in the methodology and methods being applied in the research, and finally validated in peer-reviewers for the publication of the study.
2	Research Funding	Funding for a research project shall be based on the scientific merit as identified from the review of the grant proposal and the credentials of the researcher including research output from the previously funded projects.
3	Competence	A single investigator must be either professionally competent for independent research or be supervised by a qualified supervisor/collaborator.
4	Participation of Student	All research projects funded by UGC must involve students for their theses and academic advancement. Flourishing environment shall be provided to students to be involved in research even after their degree.
5	Research Output	All research funding must have targeted output. The primary outputs for research grants are students' theses, conference presentations and publications in peer-reviewed journals. Additional outputs include patents, start-up enterprises and industry-academia collaboration for development based on research outcome.
6	Timeliness	Each program to be executed and accomplished within the stipulated timelines. Unjustified delays in progress reporting and completion should have appropriate penalties.
7	Fiscal Responsibility	No grants are personal income of the grantee. Grants must be used responsibly according to the proposal and in compliance with the applicable conditions of UGC and relevant laws. Funding must be acknowledged in research publications.
8	National Priority	National priority is *a priori* appraisal of academic and developmental priorities and one of the indicators for the evaluation of the proposal. Researcher must be allowed to explain the proposed project's focus to the national priority.

9	Communication	Timely communication of information through pre-specified channels is required.
10	Integrity and Ethics	Professional integrity and ethics shall be maintained in research activities, review process and administration. Research misconducts, such as fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, misuse of fund and other harmful activities are subjects for investigation followed by due penalty.
11	Participation	Rigorous participation of beneficiary institutions and individuals must be sought at every level of planning, implementation, monitoring, and control mechanism. Underprivileged group must be given due benefit for equitable participation.
12	Quality Control and Assurance	The research funding procedure must have a mechanism for quality control and assurance in the proposal review and awarding of the grants.
13	Grievance Redress	There must be a mechanism and procedure for accepting and addressing the grievances of the applicants and stakeholders.
B	B. Scientific Merit Review[3]	
1	Quality	Proposals, reports and publications must be evaluated based on meritocracy, rational legitimacy, academic value and potential technological and societal impact.
2	Expert Assessment	Collectively, reviewers should have the appropriate knowledge and expertise to assess the proposal both at the level of the broad context of the research field(s) to which it contributes and with respect to the specific objectives and methodology. Reviewers should be selected according to clear criteria. Appropriate review mechanisms that are sensitive and responsive to the purpose and potential impact of interdisciplinary research should be established.
3	Transparency	Decisions must be based on clearly described rules, procedures and assessment criteria that are published in advance. All eligible proposals should be treated in the same manner. Applicants should receive appropriate feedback on the review of their proposal.
4	Impartiality	Proposals must be assessed fairly on their merit and in the context of other national and international research. It must be ensured that assessments are free from biases. Conflicts of interest must be declared and managed according to defined, published processes. Guidance and training to staff and peer reviewers must be provided on both the definition and the management of conflict of interest and potentially unconscious bias.
5	Appropriateness	The peer/merit review process applied must be appropriate for the research area and call objectives with respect to the size and complexity of the call.
6	Confidentiality	All proposals, including related data, intellectual property and other documents, must be treated in confidence by reviewers and organizations involved in the review process.
7	Integrity and Ethical Considerations	The responsible conduct of research is at the very essence of the scientific process and is intrinsic to society's trust in science. Therefore, ethics and integrity are paramount to the review process

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8	Gender, Equality and Diversity	The quality of science depends on the inclusion of the brightest minds in our society, and the quality of the review process will be improved by exploiting the talent and resources from underrepresented groups such as women, early career researchers, and members of all ethnicities. When possible, participants should track the success rates as a function of gender, ethnicity and time since graduation.

[3] https://www.globalresearchcouncil.org/fileadmin//documents/GRC_Publications/Statement_of_Principles_on_Peer-Merit_Review_2018.pdf

1.6. Purpose and outcomes

UGC primarily aims at to foster collaborative research projects among university/HEIs/ industries/ faculties with its research grant supports. This grant will facilitate collaboration between two emerging research groups or one emerging and one established research group within Nepal, South Asian countries and beyond. The collaborative work can take place within a single field of study or across disciplines. This research grant support targets international scientific collaborations with exchange of researchers, collaborative publications and patent sharing. The exchange must include bi-directional travel of Principal Investigator, Research Assistant, postdocs and/or students that plan to work on the scientific collaboration defined in the research proposal. The exchange must occur within a three-year period. Grant will cover the costs of laboratory establishment, equipment, travel, accommodation and research between the two groups. Research teams must include investigators with a commitment to supporting faculty gender equity. Funded grants will contribute to the mission of the Government's Fifteenth Plans and National Education Policy-2019, one of which is advancing equity for women faculty in science and engineering. UGC expects studies to focus on the role of innovation in society, including the connection between technological progresses, job creation, boosting competitiveness and the sustainability of the research and subsequent development.

The collaborative research grants shall generate direct output in the form of research publications, monographs, book chapters and conference proceedings. These financial supports should have significant value addition to the global and local knowledge towards the advancement of science and technology. These outputs will be the basis for extension of the research grant on successive years and also to guide UGC for evaluating the applicants for future competitions.

In Nepal, many development agenda involving interdisciplinary perspectives have suffered from disciplinary outlooks. In such a context, collaborative research works bring in different views, multiple perspectives, and plural theoretical frames. As a result, interactions of different disciplinary perspectives and multiple concepts from different researchers in collaborative projects produce new and innovative outcomes. The themes of the proposals for collaborative research grant should, therefore, aim to blend various subject areas spanning across nations, fields, HEIs, departments, or private sectors. Collaborative research projects should be directed to resolve problems and reconcile differences. The UGC grant shall, therefore, promote the culture of systematic thinking and grasping various facets of a development agenda.[4]

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[4] For example, construction of an international airport in Nepal is not just the jurisdiction of transport facility development. The airport will alter the migration and settlement pattern, create a new scenario for urban development, reshape the inland transportation network, boost local economy, have sizable impact to the environment and markedly contribute to the trade and tourism sectors.

Section II: Guidelines for Collaborative Research Grant

2.1 Collaborative Research Funding

Table 2 shows the ceiling of the maximum funding that UGC will award to a successful collaborative research project. Nevertheless, the proposal will be considered for the immediate lower class if the total budget requirement for a research proposal is below the maximum funding for its class of research.[5]

Table 2: Ceiling for collaborative research funding

Class of Research	Maximum Funding per project[6]
Wet Laboratory Based Research	15 million NPR
Social Survey Research	10 million NPR
Dry Lab Based or Model-Based Research or Combination of physical and social science research	5 million NPR

2.2 UGC's priority types of collaboration and weightage

Out of the six categories of collaborative research as outlined in section 1.4, UGC aims to extend collaborative research grant with the weightage as shown in Table 3. The weightage will be the basis of selecting new proposals in each category per year on a budgetary basis.[7] The applicants shall specify their category of collaboration during application.

Table 3: Weightage of the fund allocated for collaborative research based on their categories

#	Category of collaboration	Weightage range (%)	Condition/Explanation
1	Industry-academia collaboration (IAC)	10-30	• Only the sub-category "Industry as a facility-provider" as discussed in section 1.4.1 will be considered for competition. • The direct cost of laboratory[8] or field expenses incurred because of the research project can be covered. • Cost of one supervisor or trainer serving as a CoI from the industry side may be covered, with the consent of host institution of PI

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[5] For example, a wet laboratory-based research proposal demanding a budget of 12 million NPR will be considered into the second class (10 million NPR) and if demanding 8 million NPR, it will be considered into the third class (5 million NPR).

[6] Funding amounts are determined corresponding to the requirements of the research and the potential for the research to advance and understanding of critical issues, knowledge transformation to society and boosting economy of the country.

[7] The actual weightage of fund disbursement in a year may differ slightly because the actual disbursement will be based on the progress of the project.

[8] Cost of reagents, test materials, sample preparation and other consumables are eligible for coverage. However, indirect costs such as rent of the laboratory space or the depreciation cost of the machines will not be covered.

2	Inter-university collaboration (Inter-UC)	10-30	• Each partner university shall have at least one graduate student working towards the competing research project. • Priority will be given to collaboration with international universities. Nevertheless, remuneration and travel related expenses of foreign nationals (CoIs) may be covered only if they occur while working (granted research projected based work) in Nepal.
3	Intra-university collaboration (Intra-UC)	10-30	• Each department or unit as a partner of the collaboration shall have at least one graduate student working towards the competing research project.
4	Trans-national collaboration (TNC)	0-10	• Remuneration and travel related expenses of foreign nationals (CoIs) may be covered only if they occur while working in Nepal. • The participating HEI shall have at least one graduate student working towards the competing research project.
5	Government-funded academic research (GFR)	0	• UGC grants are provided to research projects that have no external sources of funding
6	Non-governmental organizations funded academic research (NGR)	0	• UGC grants are provided to research projects that have no external sources of funding

NB
In case of research project qualifying for more than one category of collaboration, applicants may choose the preferred category.

2.3 Number of Awards

- Based on the availability of fund for collaborative research grant, UGC will determine the maximum number of new proposals during the first month of each fiscal year. Maximum number will also be defined for the four collaboration categories from SN 1 to 4 in Table 3. Grants shall be awarded to an individual researcher and a group of researchers for their individual research or collaborative research project through open competition.

- The UGC budgetary system will have collaborative research grant as a rolling fund. When sufficiently justified by the research proposal, a collaborative research shall be up to 2.5 years. With adequate justification, it may be extended for a maximum of six months.

2.4 Minimum Eligibility Criteria

Table 4 shows a minimum of eligibility criteria to apply for the collaborative research grant. The criteria envision a departure in collaborative research by encouraging the engagement of best minds within and outside the nation, and also within and outside the academic institutions.

Table 4: Minimum eligibility criteria for application to the collaborative research grant

Parameters	Eligibility
Host/Applicant institution	• The HEI of PI will serve as the host institution. Any government or community supported HEI in Nepal will be an eligible host institution.
Partner institution	• Government or legally registered non-government organization (with demonstrated collaborative research work for past three years) with stated or deemed jurisdiction to collaborate with a host institution may collaborate for submitting an application for a collaborative research. • For the IAC category (Industry as a facility-provider), the industry shall have at least one affiliated personnel who should participate as a CoI. The industry shall have certificate of duly registered/renewed in Nepal and have received a tax clearance certificate for the previous year as applicable to the laws of Nepal. • For the Inter-UC or Intra-UC category, each partner (HEIs/Universities) shall have at least one graduate student working towards the competing research project. • For an Inter-UC proposal to be eligible for international collaboration, the international partner university shall be to be ranked within top 1000 universities as per the Times Higher Education ranking of the year prior to the application year. • For the TNC category, the research project shall comprise at least two CoI working in universities from two different foreign countries and ranked within Top 500 universities of the world as per the Times Higher Education ranking during the year prior to the application year.[9]
Principal Investigator (PI)	• Nepali Citizen • Full-time faculty member of HEIs in Nepal with at least 3 years of service tenure remaining • PhD Degree • Five or more research articles published in Scopus-indexed journals (at least 2 as a main author or corresponding author) • At the time of application, must have been supervising (including co-supervision) at least three graduate students towards their graduate research.
CoInvestigators[10] (CoI) (At least -2)	• Nepali Citizen • Faculties from different higher education/research institutions or researchers/experts involved in private organizations • PhD Degree[11] • Two or more research articles published in Scopus-indexed journals.(at least one as a main author or corresponding author[12])

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[9] PI of the overarching trans-national research may not necessarily be a university faculty member and could be from a globally renowned authority/society in the relevant field such as ASTM International. The leader of the Nepali component of the research project may apply as PI for the UGC collaborative research grant.

[10] In order to motivate relatively underprivileged community campuses to get into research programs, a provision is included in the evaluation scheme to give additional marks for any collaboration with faculty members from community campuses. PI is encouraged to build teams including junior and senior academic staff, as well as both male and female researchers.

[11] This criterion will be waived for experienced fulltime faculty members of public and community HEIs with a minimum of 5 years' experience and a minimum of master's degree. The application/proposal shall indicate about it.

[12] This criterion will be waived for: fulltime faculties of public and community HEIs, or female applicants, or applicants from disadvantaged groups as per the applicable laws of Nepal. The application/proposal shall indicate about it.

2.5 Application Procedure

- UGC shall publicly call for applications for collaborative research grants. The notice shall be published in at least one national level print media with UGC link where details would be published.
- A minimum of 4 weeks' duration shall be given to apply for the grants.
- Interested HEIs should submit application form (**Annex II**) along with research proposal and other necessary documents via online to the UGC Secretariat by 12:00 midnight of the deadline date mentioned in the application call.
- The proposal shall be complete with an endorsement from the principal/chief/department head of the HEIs and organizations that belong to PI and CoI's. Incomplete application will not be entertained.

2.6 Selection Process

Step I: The Research Division at UGC provides a code against the candidate's name to each received proposal for blind review.

Step II: UGC assigns two reviewers[13] for each proposal. The reviewers use the specific evaluation form prescribed by UGC **(Annex III)** to evaluate the research proposal.

Step III: Evaluation from reviewers is either entertained confidentially through electronic media or is done at the office of UGC.

Step IV: Unless two reviewers' scores differ by 30% or more, the scores are averaged and those applicants who receive at least 50% average score are selected for oral presentation. In case the reviewers' scores differ by 30% or more, the proposals are sent to a third reviewer for evaluation and two closest scores are averaged for the selection.

Step V: All candidates securing 50% or more scores on their research proposals are invited for oral presentation in the presence of the panel of experts nominated by the UGC. To the extent possible, the oral presentation will be arranged in a virtual mode. The panel of experts[14] use the specific evaluation form prescribed by UGC **(Annex IV)** to evaluate the oral presentation. The mean of the score from the panel of experts is taken as the final score of the oral presentation.

Step VI: The Research Division, by mobilizing a team with minimum qualification at par with that of reviewers, will evaluate the applicant's academic and publication record, team formation and collaboration status **(Annex V).**

Step VII: A Final Merit List is prepared by the Research Division based on the score from the proposal evaluation, oral presentation evaluation and research team's evaluation (i.e., the applicant's academic and publication record, team formation and collaboration status) as discussed in **Annex VI**. The Research Division forwards the prepared merit list to Research Standing Committee to take final decision on the selection of the candidates for the award.

Step VIII: The UGC Research Division announces the awards through the UGC website and invites the candidates and the head of the institutions to sign[15] a formal agreement after allocating for an appeal period and conditional upon the outcomes of the appeal. At least one alternative applicant shall also be nominated. If for any reason,

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[13] A Reviewer shall have a PhD degree and shall have published at least 2 papers in Scopus indexed journals during the last 5 years. The reviewer should sign an agreement about not having the conflict of interest with the proposals being reviewed and to provide fair evaluation. At least 10 percent of all the reviewers for collaborative research assigned by the UGC shall be from foreign universities working as a fulltime faculty. UGC will pay remuneration to the reviewers unless the reviewer expresses a written commitment to serve as a volunteer.

[14] The minimum qualification of each member of the panel of experts shall be not less than that of a reviewer.

[15] UGC prefers online signing.

the successful applicant cannot enter into a contract agreement, the alternative applicant shall be given the opportunity.

2.7 Appeal and hearing

- Applicants of research grant awards secure the right to appeal the decision of the Selection Board.
- The UGC Research Division will form an appeal hearing committee. The committee shall be comprised of experts other than those involved in the original selection process
- The appeal hearing committee will preferably have authority higher than those of the experts previously involved in selection process in terms of the area of expertise, research, publication, as well as qualification.
- In response to the applicant's appeal or appeals, the committee will have the right to reevaluate the file, including the proposal, credentials and documents related the application process. However, the oral exam will not be under the scope of reevaluation. Based on the re-evaluation, the result may be revised.

2.8 Code of conduct

UGC is fully committed to the principle of honesty, integrity, and fair play in the conduct of its business. All applications should comply with the UGC code of conduct.

2.9 Financial negotiation, Contract Agreement and Implementation

Following the Evaluation and Selection process, UGC may enter into negotiations with PI and CoIs. Final budget will be approved by UGC after revising the proposal in response to the comments and feedback provided in the negotiation and evaluation process. A template for the contract agreement between UGC and the research team is shown in **Annex VII**. Similarly, an outline for preparing the budget for the research project is shown in **Annex VIII**.

2.10 Progress monitoring and evaluation

All collaborative research awardees will be subjected to a mandatory annual evaluation. This evaluation will be the final one for grants that are terminating in the year and will be the progress evaluation if the evaluation year is not the last year of the grant duration. In order to monitor the progress status of the collaborative research, an evaluation form will be developed during the first amendment of this SOPG next year. By signing the contract agreement for collaborative research projects, it is deemed that the research team agrees to abide to the progress monitoring and evaluation criteria to be developed by UGC.

Annex I: Themes for collaborative research

I.1 Development and prosperity
The Constitution of Nepal has set the national agenda as achieving good governance, development, and prosperity while being committed to socialism that would be based on democratic values and norms. In the modern civilization, the world economy can be described in three phases: agricultural (agrarian), industrial and knowledge (or knowledge-based economy). In an agricultural economy, land is the key resource. In an industrial economy, natural resources such as ores, and labor are the main assets. A knowledge economy is one in which knowledge is the key resource (Houghton and Sheehan, 2000).

Nepal appears to be transitioning through the three economies simultaneously. First, agricultural sector remains largely conventional typical to the agrarian economy era. It contributed 26.2% to the gross domestic product (GDP) of Nepal in the recent year (MoF 2021). Second, Nepal is graduating into a developing country from a least developed country. This transition process involves an extensive industrial development, and thus, bringing the scenario typical to the industrial development age. Nepal is among the top five countries in the world to have the maximum remittance to GDP ratio (World Bank 2021). Nepal earned in excess US $ 8 billion in personal remittances in 2020. Itexceeds 50% of the national budget. Remittance is mostly sent by industrial labor force that goes to many developing countries, including Malaysia and gulf countries. For the national population of approximately 30 million, as many as 5 million Nepali youths are estimated to be working abroad. Academic research should suggest the ways to utilize the remittances earned and the skills learned from abroad. Third, the global wave of knowledge economy has naturally influenced Nepal, too. Higher education in Nepal should acknowledge coexistence of the three types of economies and generate customized solutions for development.

Unlike for many developed and developing countries, fighting with poverty is a pressing challenge. A sustained but fast paced economic growth is a must for the well-being of Nepal and Nepali. The higher education sector should produce new graduates who can clearly determine national interests, priority sectors and strategies while keeping view of the global developments and collaboration with international researchers. Nepali graduates should focus on solving nation's miseries. National resources should be properly utilized for sustainable development of Nepal.

1.2 Green, resilient and inclusive development
One of the goal of GoN is to protect the right of citizens to live in a clean, green, and healthy environment through effective pollution control, garbage management, and promotion of greenery. For this research should focus on transitions in energy, agriculture, food, water, soil, transport, manufacturing systems etc. Investment should be done on risk management of pandemics, climate change etc. The research outcomes must reduce the disparities in the opportunities.

I.3 Sustainable development goals (SDGs)
United Nations has set 17 sustainable development goals to be accomplished by 2030. As a member of the UN, Nepal has also committed for SDGs. From elimination of poverty to access to energy, from generating income to maintaining gender equality, from maneuvering global warming to protecting environment, the 17 goals and 169 targets basically cover all the development needs and aspirations of countries like Nepal. SDGs are, therefore, meant to be integral part in all research and development activities. Most of the indicators of SDGs have

corresponding relationship with development aspirations. If we can meet development targets, we can efficiently maintain sustainable development goals. Nevertheless, knowingly aligning our actions towards SDGs will better achieve them while simultaneously fulfilling our development needs and aspirations. The higher education of the coming days should internalize SDGs.

I.3 High-performance (smart) materials and products
In a global sphere, several new research and development fields, including nanotechnology and biotechnology have been emerging. As an overarching theme, these developments can be covered under the umbrella of smart materials and products. They include semiconductors, super conductors, nanofibers, artificial tissues, cells and plasmas, carbon capturing materials, gene sequencing and genetic modification. Research and development should focus on the development and deployment of devices and equipment based on those materials. In this backdrop, Internet has evolved as a new agent for paradigm shifts in development process. In the context of research in Nepal, smart materials and products should not necessarily be entirely novel but they have to have significant advancement over the traditional provisions. In research works, all of these constituents should be taken into account in relation with composition or manufacturing process, consequence to the environment, energy consumption, and cost effects with research and productivity.

1.4 Climate change adaptation and Environment
I.4.1 Clean and renewable energy
Energy is vital to the livelihood of human beings. Production, trading and consumption of energy has been a major global phenomenon ever since humans started organized economic activities. Fossil fuels, including petroleum and coal were consumed excessively over the past several decades, and they have adversely contributed to the global environment. Reducing the rate of warming has been one of the most pressing challenges of the present world since the earth is warming at an unprecedented rate. Nepal is bestowed with hydropower as the clean and renewable energy source. Solar power is emerging globally as a potential future leader of energy. Nepal has a tremendous potential of solar energy, too. Hydrogen is being hailed as the major energy career in the forthcoming decades. Conversion of electrical energy into hydrogen or ammonia and consumption of hydrogen as an energy source will have water as an emission. Therefore, studies and research works have primarily directed to utilize clean and renewable sources of energy for electricity generation while maximizing the use of hydrogen as the fuel in vehicles and industries. It will be in the best interest of Nepal to catch this global trend of research and education.

I.4.2 Global warming, green economy and carbon neutrality
Global warming, green economy and carbon neutrality have been the buzz words in recent years. World environment is degrading at an alarming level. The earth has increasingly been getting hotter, and humans and animals have been experiencing extreme climatic conditions. In the meantime, the Himalayas have been melting at an alarmingly faster rate. Nepal's agriculture sector has been already affected by extreme weather patterns. Nepal's geology being one of the youngest in the world and its topography involving mountains and rivers, climate change has exacerbated disasters, such as floods and landslides. So, concerned authorities should promptly devise measures to protect environment while maneuvering global warming. At the same time, higher education in Nepal should focus on those issues with interconnection of global and local features and consequences.

I.5 Social inclusion and gender equality

As outlined in SDGs, development and prosperity of the nation can be accomplished only if people of different backgrounds and varied cultural settings are included in the mainstream society. Further, people of all the social strata, cultural groups, and geographic territories should be engaged in the development process. Fulfillment of basic needs has been constitutionally guaranteed in Nepal. Inequalities based on gender, caste, race, income, education, and culture should be eliminated. The higher education of Nepal should focus on these aspects of social realities both in rhetoric and reality, and word and action. Indeed, research and education should internalize these realities, so that students will experience noticeable behavioral changes in them. Social transformation will be possible only with transformed students.

Annex II: Application Form for the Collaborative Research and Innovation Grant

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
Sanothimi, Bhaktapur, Nepal
RESEARCH DIVISION

Affix a passport size color photo of PI

Note: Incomplete application will not proceed for evaluation

A. Personal Information

A1. Applicant (PI)'s Full Name:	A2. Gender:	A3. Age:	A4. Date of Birth:
A5. Citizenship No., Issuing District:	A6. Underprivileged Group (if any):		A7. Email(s):
A8. Permanent Address:	A9. Mailing Address:		A10. Contact Telephone Res: Office: Mobile:
A11. University:	A14. Address of Institution:		A15. Designation:
A12. Campus/School:			A16. Subject:
A13. Department:			A17. Specialization:

B. Information about the Proposed Study

B1. Proposed Title of the Study:			
B3. Research Theme:		B4. Proposed Period of Study	
i) UGC-focused frontier # I.____of Annex I	ii) Other (specify):		
B5. Proposed Budget:	B6. No. of Investigators:	B7. No. of students included (for theses[16]):	
		PhD / MPhil / Masters / Bachelors	

[16] Thesis or final year project for Bachelors Degree students.

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C. Collaboration plan in the Proposed Study

C1. Collaboration Category: (Indicate by √)	a. IAC	d. TNC
	b. Inter-UC	e. Other (specify):
	c. Intra-UC	

C2. CoICoInvestigators		
Name of CoICoInvestigator(s), contact number and Email address	Current Institution/Department (Indicate on the right with √, if the institution is a Community Campus)	Ranking of the university[17] of the CoICoI, if applicable
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

C3: Proposed collaboration plan (max. 500 words. Preferably, a graphical illustration such as a flow chart can be included)

C4. Role of Individual Investigators
[Please attach a document with a brief description of the proposed role of the Principal Investigator and each Co-Investigators included above in the proposed study]

C5. Postdoctoral Position Requested (If any)
[UGC might provide funding to hire a postdoctoral fellow for the Collaborative Research on the basis of need. If you would like to request for this assistance, please state and explain your need and request]

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[17] Based on the Times Higher Education ranking of the worldwide universities of the previous year of application

D. Research Infrastructure of Institutions

List the relevant research infrastructure in your institution(s) to conduct the proposed study		
Institute/Department	Belongs to PI or CoI (Name)	Research Infrastructure/facility[18]
Existing		
Anticipated with the research grant		

E. Academic Record of PI and CoIs (Master level, and above)

Investigators	Degree	Year	Major Subjects	Grade	Board/University

F. Up to 3 Most Recent Employment Record (including confirmed new employment, if any, in near future while working in the research project) of PI and CoIs (Please include the appointment letter. Please, mention the relevant employment records in CV of PI and all CoI's)

Period of service		Designation	Institution	Remarks
From	To			
PI				
CoICoI #1				
CoICoI #2				
Add rows for additional CoI's as applicable.				

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[18] Includes but not limited to – laboratories, testing equipment, research objects, computing facilities and computers. It may also include any pertinent MoU's to access research infrastructure of other institutions.

G. Publication and Supervision Record (Please include five recent and relevant publications of PI and CoI's here and provide a complete list in your CV).

1. Major Research Publication in **Ranked Journals/Proceedings (SCImago Journal Ranking/JCR Impact Factor)**	
Format: Authors, Title, Journal, Volume (Number), First page - Last page (Year), doi (with web link)	Rank/IF (Year)
PI	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
CoI #1	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
CoI #2	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

SN	PI or CoI (name)	Title	Completion Year (Graduation Date)	Name of Student
1				
2				
3				

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H. List of UGC and Other Research Grants Received by PI and CoI (Please attach a copy of award and the completion letter)

Year	Agency	Program and grant amount	Title	Period	PI or CoICoI (Name)

Q. Do you as a PI[19] have any other UGC funded research project currently running?[20]
(   ) Yes - You are NOT ELIGIBLE to apply for the UGC Research Grant now.
(   ) No - You may be eligible to apply for the UGC Research Grant now.

I. Research Proposal
Please, attach your research proposal with the following major components written consistently (with citations in any one format such as APA, MLA, Chicago, Turabian, or Vancouver). The proposal shall be a maximum of 20 pages inclusive of title page to the last page. The proposal shall maintain professional page layout with margins of at least 1 inch on all sides, single line spacing, font size 12.

[Important: For the purpose of double blind review, please use the applicant's name only on the cover page. Avoid using the words such as "author" or "we" to connect to the citations of the applicants]

A typical format for RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Research Proposal format:
(Note: The sequence of the sections can be altered to suit the discipline and the research methodology applied)
a. Title
b. Abstract
c. Background
d. Problem Statement and Research theme/frontier
e. Literature Review and Research Gaps
f. Conjectures/Hypotheses/ Research Questions/Research objectives
g. Relevance to National Priority (*explained in a simple language*)
h. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework, Study Design, Methods, Tools and Data Analysis
i. Innovation, Creativity and Originality
j. Foundational/Preliminary Work (*done by any team member, if any*)
k. Research Implementation Modality
l. Focus on collaboration
m. Assumptions/Risk and Mitigation measures
n. Ethical/Safety Issues
o. Activity Schedule and Budget
p. Expected Outputs – i) Research findings, ii) Publications, iii) Capacity building activities
q. Sustainability Plan

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[19]This clause applies only for PI. If you are serving as a CoI to another UGC grant, you may still be eligible to apply as a PI. If you are serving as a PI to another grant, you may still be eligible to apply as a CoI.
[20] If a Grant is running/active at the time of application but is expected to successfully complete/close by the time the proposed collaborative research grant is expected to come in effect, this clause will not prevent an applicant from the competition. Successful researchers with strong track record on UGC grant are encouraged to apply.

r. References

J. Additional Eligibility Check

Q1. Have you submitted this proposal in full or in part to any other funding agency?
(   ) Yes - You are NOT ELIGIBLE to apply for the UGC Research Grant now.
(   ) No - You may be eligible to apply for the UGC Research Grant now.
Q2. Have you submitted any other application beside this one for any UGC research grant in the current season?
(   ) Yes – Even though you can apply for more than one UGC research grant at one time, you will not be awarded for more than one proposal at a time on the status of a PI.
(   ) No - You may be eligible to apply. PLEASE PROCEED.

K. Documents required (Check √ if included)

1	Detailed Research Proposal (1 soft copy + 1 hard copy[21])	
2	Copy of Citizenship of PI[22]	
3	Copy of Appointment Letter	
4	Copies of Academic Degree (PhD[23]) of PI and CoI's	
5	Curriculum Vitae of PI and CoIs	
6	Previous UGC and other relevant Grant Certification (if any)	
7	MoU/Letters of Intent for collaboration among the host and the partner institutions	
8	Supporting letter from relevant institutions for their funding, CoI support, and use of laboratory facilities (CoI's from HEIs should include a letter from the principal/chief of the HEI)	

K. Institutional Endorsement (from all institutions where the study will be conducted)

Statement of Endorsement:
PI and/or CoI (named below) of the proposed study is/are a member in our institution and is/are qualified to conduct the proposed study. We confirm for the institutional approval and support to the team in conducting the proposed study at our institution, if the project is selected for funding from the UGC.

1. From the Institution of PI [name] and the CoI [name] (where applicable)		
Name: Designation: Institution: Address:	Signature	Official Seal
2. From the Institution of a CoInvestigator (If different than above)		
Name: Designation: Institution: Address:	Signature	Official Seal
3. From the Institution of a CoInvestigator (If different than above)		

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[21] Until a fully online system is introduced by UGC.

[22] CoI may be a foreign national.

[23] For CoI from the public or community colleges who don't have PhD degree, include that of Masters degree.

Name: Designation: Institution: Address:	Signature	Official Seal

Note
Add additional rows, if necessary.

L. Undertaking by the Applicant

We hereby declare that we have read The UGC Policy and Procedure against Research Misconduct and agree to the conditions and my obligations as an applicant. We solemnly affirm that the information we have provided are true and the research proposal we have submitted is original and has not been submitted in full or in part to any other agency seeking a grant. Any research misconduct on my part and the information provided found false at any moment, we shall be liable to disciplinary action, which may result in termination of research funding and/or rejection of application.

_____
Signature
Name: . . . .
(Principal Investigator)
Date: . . . .

_____
Signature
Name: . . . .
(Co-Investigator)
Date: . . . .

_____
Signature
Name: . . . .
(Co-Investigator)
Date: . . . .

Note

Please, add additional CoIs as appropriate.

Annex III: Proposal Evaluation Form for Collaborative Research and Innovation Grants

University Grants Commission
Sanothimi, Bhaktapur

Applicant's Code: ....

Title of the Proposal: … ... ...

1. *Evaluation of the proposal by the reviewers as defined in Section 2.6*

Indicators		Rating (Please circle the number OR give your own mark)					SCORES
		Absent	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	
1.	Research Title *(Clarity and relevance to National priority as indicated by this SOPG)*	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	
2.	Background and Problem Statement with adequate literature review *(Adequate, relevant, well-stated)*	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	
3.	Foundational / Preliminary Work (done by the Investigators) *(Relevant and strongly supporting to the study)*	0	2.5	5	7.5	10	
4.	Study Design, Methods, Tools and Data analysis *(Faultless, advanced, well-suited and skillful)*	0	2.5	5	7.5	10	
5.	Expected Outputs (research findings, publications, capacity building) *(Envisioned clearly and academically significant)*	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	
6.	Innovation, Creativity and Originality *(High)*	0	3.75	7.5	11.25	15	
7.	Ethical and Safety Issues *(Well-addressed, even when not-applicable)*	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	
8.	Activity Schedule *(Well-planned)*	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	
9.	Budget *(Well-defined, detailed, and convincing)*	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	
10.	Human resources planning and allocation *(Well-organized project management modality and management structure)*	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	

Indicators		Rating (Please circle the number OR give your own mark)					SCORES
		Absent	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	
11.	Assumptions/Risk and Mitigation measures (*Clarity in visualization of risk and their mitigation measures*)	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	
12.	Sustainability Plan (*Convincing plan for continuation of research activities beyond the project period*)	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	
13.	Address of UGC-focused research frontiers of Annex I	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	
14.	Degree and likely impact of collaboration (synergistic outcome)	0	2.5	5	7.5	10	
15.	Prospect of capacity building for future collaboration in world-class research[24]	0	1.25	2.5	3.75	5	
Total scores (out of 100) =							

Minimum 50 scores is required to be selected for oral presentation round.

2. Reviewer's comments and recommendations

A. Major Strengths of the Proposed Study:

B. Major Weaknesses of the Proposed Study:

C. Suggestions for the Improvement/Revision of the Proposal:
[Add additional sheets if necessary]

_____
Reviewer's Signature
Reviewer's Full Name: ... ...
Reviewer's Institution: ... ...
Date**:** ... ...

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[24] Inter-UC category with international collaboration and TNC category will receive full mark.

Annex IV: Oral Presentation Evaluation Form for Collaborative Research and Innovation Grants

University Grants Commission
Sanothimi, Bhaktapur

Applicant's Code: ....

Title of the Proposal: … ... ...

Evaluation of the Presentation by the panel of experts as defined in Section 2.6

Indicators	Rating (Please circle the number OR give your own mark)					SCORES
	Absent	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	
1 Quality of the Research Proposal (28)						
a. Research Title *(Specific, clear)*	0	0.5	1	1.5	2	
b. Problem Statement, Theoretical/Conceptual Framework/statement, Proposition/Conjectures/Hypotheses, Research Questions *(Well framed)*	0	1	2	3	4	
c. Foundational/Preliminary work (done by the Investigators) *(Adequate, promising)*	0	1	2	3	4	
d. Research Objectives *(Academically interesting, adequate, achievable)*	0	1	2	3	4	
e. Methodology *(Advanced, well-suited)*	0	1	2	3	4	
f. Work and Resource Plan *(Well-planned and scheduled)*	0	1	2	3	4	
g. Expected Outputs/Findings *(Envisioned clearly, significant, national priority, high potential for publication)*	0	1	2	3	4	
h. Sustainability plan	0	0.5	1	1.5	2	
2 Competence of the Research Team (16)						
a. Depth of the knowledge of the subject *(Candidate/team has in-depth knowledge of the study subject)*	0	1	2	3	4	
b. Understanding of research opportunity *(Candidate could convince that the research is significantly new and contributing)*	0	1	2	3	4	
c. Skill (methodology, analysis) *(The team has adequate technical skill)*	0	1	2	3	4	

Indicators	Rating (Please circle the number OR give your own mark)					SCORES
	Absent	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	
d. Enthusiasm for research publication *(Candidate has enthusiasm for publication and familiarity with quality journals, and commitment to students' theses)*	0	1	2	3	4	
3 Quality of the presentation (6)						
a. Well-organized	0	0.5	1	1.5	2	
b. Fluently delivered	0	0.5	1	1.5	2	
c. Impressive answers during Q/A	0	0.5	1	1.5	2	
Total (out of 50)						
Minimum 25 scores is required for the final selection round.						

Evaluator's Comments (Mandatory)
A. Major Strengths of the Proposed Study:
B. Major Weaknesses of the Proposed Study:
C. Evaluators Impression about the Competence of the Investigators for the Proposed Study: Excellent ☐   Good ☐   Moderate ☐   Poor ☐
D. Evaluators recommendation and Justification for the Grant Award to the Proposed Study: Strongly Recommend for the award ☐   Recommend for the award ☐   Do not Recommend for the award ☐   Justification for Recommendation
E. Suggestions for the Improvement/Revision of the Proposal: [Use additional sheets if needed]
Evaluator's Signature: ... ...   Evaluator's Full Name: ... ...   Date: ... ...

Annex V: Evaluation of research activities of the Principal Investigator and the team
[The full mark for this evaluation is 100. Maximum obtained marks will be normalized in such a way that the applicant with the highest marks among all applicants for the collaborative research grant will be given the full mark]

SN	Indicators and marks	Scores obtained
1	Publication Record of the Principal Investigator-max. 30 • Patent (national or international; personal or joint) (5 for each) • Article in journal/Proceeding with Q1 and Q2 SJR (2.5 for each) • Article in journal/Proceeding with Q3 or below SJR (1.0 for each, Maximum score = 5) • Research experience/Supervision of academic research (PhD-2.5 marks for each)	
2	Publication Record of the Co-Investigators (cumulative)[25]- max 15 • Patent (5 for each) • Article in journal/Proceeding with Q1 and Q2 SJR (2.5 for each) • Article in journal/Proceeding with Q3 or below SJR (0.5 for each, Maximum score = 5) • Research experience/Supervision of academic research (PhD-2.5 marks for each)	
3	Academic collaboration- max 30 • International Collaboration- max 15 • Inter-university Collaboration (National Level)- max 10 • Interdepartmental Collaboration-max 5 (Maximum 25% of the full-mark of each category[26] for each collaboration that generated at least one SJR publication when the applicant worked as a PI or CoI in the past and co-authored the publication). [cumulative of all applicants]	
4	Industry/Private Sectoral Collaboration-max 15 (maximum 5 marks for each collaboration that generated at least one SJR publication when the applicant worked as a PI or CoI in the past and co-authored the publication). [cumulative of all applicants]	
5	PI or CoI from a community campus – max 10 Involvement of each eligible PI or CoI from a community campus gets 3 mark each in normal situation and 5 marks each if the candidate is female or from disadvantaged group.	
Subtotal		

Annex VI: Total mark and selection of successful applicants
The marks obtained from Annexes III, IV and the normalized mark from Annex V will be added to obtain the total mark out of the full mark of 250. For each of the four collaboration categories (#3 to 6 in Table 3), a list of successful applicants will be published on the merit basis.

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[25] In case of multi-authored article, the first author gets the full mark, the corresponding author gets 3/4 of the full mark, and all other authors get 1/2 of the full mark each. An article authored by PI and CoI will be marked only once.

[26] For the international collaboration, the full mark is 15, so each such collaboration of either PI or CoIwill receive 3.75 marks. No double counting will be made for the same project if both PI and CoI were involved in the same project.

Based on the type of proposal and the need of budget, each proposal will be classified into one of the three funding classes as outlined in
Table 2. Therefore, the actual number of successful applications in each of the collaboration categories will be governed by the budget allocated for the respective category.

The highest scoring projects in the waiting list will be considered for the grant if any of the categories does not have sufficient successful applications under the allocated quota.

Annex VII: Agreement for Collaborative Research and Innovation Grants (template)

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
Sanothimi, Bhaktapur, Nepal
[Subject to change during the agreement]

This multi-party agreement is made on this _____ day of _____ in the year _____ by and between:

1. University Grants Commission, Sanothimi, Bhaktapur, Nepal
   and
2. [Name of Host Institution]: ……………………………………….
3. [Name of Principal Investigator]: …………………………………
4. [Names of Partner Institution]: …………………………………
5. [Names of Co-Investigator/Team Members]: …………………………
   (hereafter, referred to as "parties")

In connection with the *UGC Collaborative Research Grants* awarded to the research team led by the Principal Investigator ………………………… for the Research proposal entitled ………………………………………………………………………………………….

The parties hereby agree to abide by the following terms and conditions:

Terms and Conditions

A. Right, Duties and Obligation of UGC

1. Determine the amount of the grant to be awarded for this Research Grant based on the proposed budget on the Research Proposal and the needs assessment made by the Research Division based further on the recommendations made by the Reviewers of the Proposal.
2. Disburse the approved grant in installments to the Host Institution of the Principal Investigator according to the scheme outlined in Section B of this agreement.
3. Periodically monitor the progress. For this, UGC will form a cluster committee to guide, monitor and evaluate all the research progress made starting from the inception report until the finalization. All collaborative research grants are subjected to a rigorous annual evaluation.
4. Take action in the case of unsatisfactory progress, negligence, or misconduct on the part of the Investigators and the lack of cooperation of the research project on the part of the Host Institution.
5. Assist the Host Institution to have a code of academic integrity and policy on research misconduct, and on maintaining of research ethics.
6. Monitor the agreement between the Host and Partner Institutions in their MOUs/ contracts are duly followed.
7. Provide a Certificate of Grant Award and Completion to the Principal Investigator and the CoInvestigators upon the completion of the project marked by the achievement of the committed outcomes (deliverables) and the submission of the final report of the Project to the UGC.

B. Obligation of the Host and Partner Institutions

1. *General Obligations*
   i. Provide full institutional support to the research team and the research project.
   ii. Assist the Principal Investigator and the Co-Investigators in regard to fulfilling their obligation to supervise thesis students as specified in **Article C-1**.
   iii. Have an institutional code of academic integrity and procedure to address research misconduct in place and ensure strict adherence to them by the Institution, the research team and all members of the Institution (subject to **Article A-5**).

    iv. Abide by the UGC regulations related to research and academic programs.
    v. Monitor the progress of the project and facilitate any monitoring by UGC.
    vi. As a host institution, serve as a liaison institution to represent all partner institutions as and when required.

2. *Financial Obligations*
    i. Accept the installment of the research grant disbursed by UGC for the research project.
    ii. Disburse the research grant received from UGC to the Investigator according to the scheme outlined in the **Section D**.
    iii. Audit the financial statement of the Research Project as per rules of the Institution.
    iv. Refund the dispersed amount of the grant to UGC, if the research project is terminated or not completed within the specified time or the deadline extended by UGC.

C. Obligation of the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators

1. Supervise at least three graduate students (collectively by PI and CoI at their institutions) for their theses by providing research projects based on or complementary to the research project awarded by this agreement.
2. Provide research support to Postdoctoral Scholar (preferred).
3. Maintain the highest level of academic integrity and research ethics.
4. Make honest and best use of the research fund. The research fund can only be used to cover allowable expenditure as specified in the Budget Estimate. All applicable financial rules must be followed for payments.
5. Accommodate UGC's reviewers' suggestions on the research proposal and periodic progress reports.
6. Submit a progress report and make an oral presentation every trimester. To conduct the oral presentation, UGC may arrange a review conference[27] with participation open to all grantees, reviewers and experts (particularly for the annual review). Progress made will be evaluated by a cluster committee formed by UGC. The progress report should include progress in research, academic activities and a financial statement on the spending of the research fund. The progress report should not exceed 5-10 pages (3,000 to 5,000 words). UGC may opt for an online meeting for the oral presentation and for report submission.
7. Make a final oral presentation on research work after the submission of final draft report to the UGC. **All the progress report submitted at UGC will be checked for plagiarism.**
8. Publish at least two original research article(s) based on the funded research work on high JCR Impact Factor/ SJR ranked journals. The articles shall have the authorship of the involved student, the involved CoI and PI. They must acknowledge the UGC grant.

D. Grant Disbursement

1. The **UGC Collaborative Research Grants** Research Budget Estimate prepared based on the budget estimate outline is shown in **Annex VIII**. Budget estimate shall be approved by UGC and shall be attached in the Annex of this agreement. It will be used as a reference for allowable expenditure and approval by UGC for adjustment during the project period.
2. Each expenditure item in the budget shall clearly be identified whether it will be spent through the host institution or through the partner institutions. The total budget shall identify the percentage for each institution. The mechanism of fund transfer will be clearly stated in the agreement. Unless otherwise stated, fund will flow directly from UGC to the participating institution. Only when direct flow is not possible, fund will flow from UGC to the host institution and from the host institution to the partner institution. In the latter case, a separate

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[27] UGC aims to promote the culture of academic conferences and this initiative will help towards that objective.

MoU shall be signed by the host and the partner institutions under the witness of UGC. The MoU shall form the basis of fund flow from the host to the partner institutions.

3. The Research Fund is transferred to the Host (and partner) Institution(s) in installments outlined in Table 5. It will be disbursed by the grant-receiving institutions to PI and CoI following the procedure outlined in **Article D-4**.

Table 5: Milestones for paying the installments of the collaborative research grant[28]

Within one week from the signing of the agreement	40%
After the successful completion of the annual review[29]	50%
After submission of the Final Draft Report to UGC and completion of oral presentation (including the hard copy of final report), proof of manuscript submission to journal	10%

4. The procedure for the disbursement of the Research Fund from the grant-receiving Institution to PI or CoI in installments as requested by PI is as follows:
   a. As part of this agreement, PI and CoI's prepare a plan for research activities/procurement with cost estimation and submit it to UGC for approval.
   b. UGC may also suggest a revision in the plan and PI is required to submit the revised plan. Once UGC agrees to the revised plan, all parties enter into the agreement.
   c. For each milestone shown in Table 5, PI submits a request for the fund to UGC. A copy of the request will be submitted to the host and all the partner institutions.
   d. UGC transfers the fund to the host (and partner) institution(s). .
   e. The Host Institution disburses the requested funds to PI (after deducting the overhead) and to the partner institutions based on the MoU of **Article D2**, where applicable. The partner institution disburses the requested funds to the respective CoI's (after deducting the overhead if applicable).
   f. Each participating institution that receives the fund audits the Research Project expenditure following the rules of the Institution.
5. The Overhead Cost is for covering research management costs in the Institutions. Research Management Cell (RMC) or any equivalent body in the Institutions is expected to receive a part or whole of the Overhead Cost.
6. The parties understand that as the research project progresses, depending upon the results obtained and prevailing condition of market, the headings and the estimate of expenditure may need adjustment.
7. The grantee may reallocate/adjust[30] the budget among different headings provided such alterations remain within ±10% of the originally allocated budget for any heading. If further alterations are required, UGC's approval will be required.
8. Laboratory equipment, reagents, consumables and software purchased with the Research Support Fund are the property of the Host or the Partner Institution for which they are purchased.
9. For any patentable invention, a separate agreement complying with the policies of universities to which the Investigators belong shall be made.

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[28] Both the research fund and the overhead cost components of the research grant will follow the same installments.

[29] The contract agreement will have clearly defined milestones for the minimum number of annual reviews. This installment will be further divided into each annual reviews. So, for a project with plans of two annual reviews, an installment of 30% will be released after each review.

[30] Any adjustment in the budget estimate made by Investigators must be reported to UGC in separate communication or in periodic Progress Reports and the Final Report.

10. The Final Report must include the financial report of the research project.

E. Additional Conditions

1. The Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators declare that the proposed research is original and has not been submitted in full or in part to any funding agency for funding.

2. The Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators declare that they have read and understood the UGC Guidelines regarding Research Misconduct and the UGC Procedure for Addressing Allegation of Research Misconduct and declare commitments to abide by these guidelines and procedure.

3. Before the agreement, the UGC will provide to the research team the comments of the proposal reviewers and the oral presentation evaluators and the information about the grant approved by the UGC. The team is required to revise the research proposal and the budget accordingly.

4. After signing the agreement, any major changes in the title or the objectives of the research project are not allowed. Minor changes may be permitted by the UGC upon the recommendation of the UGC cluster Committee.

5. Progress reports, publications in peer-reviewed journals, paper presentations in seminars/workshops, etc. are the major output indicators (deliverables) to be used to evaluate the performance of the Researchers.

6. The Investigators and the Students conducting the research must maintain a Research Logbook in recording all activities and relevant notes on a weekly basis.

7. If the progress is found unsatisfactory by the UGC reviewers and monitoring officers, the UGC will notify the Principal Investigator, Co-Investigators and the Institution and give direction for improvement. The UGC might take action, including a request to the Host Institution to withhold the disbursement of the Research Fund or the termination of the contract if a persistent lack of progress and negligence are found.

8. Research misconduct and any unethical activity are punishable. It is the Host Institution (Partner Institution)'s obligation to conduct the investigation on any suspected or alleged research misconduct. Institutions that do not have adequate resources to conduct such an investigation might request the UGC for assistance. Any proceeding in the case of research misconduct will involve four steps of action consisting of Inquiry, Investigation, Adjudication and Appeal, and shall be carried out with fairness and expedience as fundamental principles.

9. The Research must be completed within 3 years from the date of the disbursement of the first installment of the grant. An extension for up to six months may be considered if the research team makes a request, on a justifiable cause, to the UGC. The grant will be closed at the end of the three years and six months (at maximum). If the research team is unable to submit the final report on stipulated time, the whole research team will be listed in the UGC barred list (will not be eligible to apply for further UGC grants). Nevertheless, UGC may reconsider the case only after the reimbursement of the dispersed grants to UGC either through institution or individually.

10. The materials purchased with the research fund are the property of the Institution or the laboratory of the Principal Investigator or the CoInvestigator at the respective Institution.

11. In case of disputes with any issues with this agreement, the UGC reserves the rights to give the final decision.

1. On behalf of the UGC   2. Principal Investigator

Signature: _____   Signature: _____

Name: ………………………..   Name: _____

Designation: Secretary   Designation: _____

University Grants Commission   Institution: _____

Date: _____   Address: _____

                                     Telephone: _____

[Official Seal]   Mobile phone: _____

3. On behalf of UGC

Signature: _____

Name:

Designation: Research Director

Research Division, UGC

Date: _____

4. CoInvestigator-1   5. CoInvestigator-2

Signature: _____   Signature: _____

Name: _____   Name: _____

Designation: _____   Designation: _____

Institution: _____   Institution: _____

Address: _____   Address: _____

Telephone: _____   Telephone: _____

Mobile phone: _____   Mobile phone: _____

Date: _____   Date: _____

Annex VIII: UGC Research Grants Budget Outline

UGC Collaborative Research Grant for Faculty Members
OUTLINE FOR BUDGET ESTIMATE

Funding limit: Funding limit for various categories of research and grants …...

(Please breakdown the budget estimate in yearly basis)

A. Personnel Cost
  A1. Faculty members (each faculty member can charge up to 10% of the basic salary during the project period)
  A2. Postdoctoral Fellow: Maximum up to two years with monthly stipend not exceeding NPR 50,000
  A3. Students (Stipend for each student should not exceed four months for Bachelors, Six Months for Masters and 24 months for PhD). Per month Stipend for bachelor, masters/MPhil and PhD students should not exceed NPR 15,000, 25,000 and 40, 000, respectively).
  A4. Collaborators outside universities: The maximum value of total time compensation for each collaborator should be equivalent to a faculty member (basic salary). Only the CoI's from Nepal will be eligible for this compensation.
  A5. Short term Consultant remuneration should not exceed 10% of (A1+A2+A3+A4).
B. Equipment, Consumables and Services
  B.1. Computer and Software (specify)
  B.2. Equipment and Instruments (specify)
  B.3. Special Reagents/Kits/Chemicals (specify)
  B.4. Consumables-office supply, communications
  B.5. Repair and maintenance cost
  B.6. Laboratory upgrading cost sharing
  B.7. Service (For e.g. Access to scientific instruments, Subscription to open access journals or publications; organizing trainings/ workshop, patent filling etc.)
  B.8. Field investigation/testing
  B.9. Other (specify, add more items as necessary)
C. Travel costs
  C.1. Travel Cost covers expenses of project team members (PI, CoI and students) related to field work, in project meetings, attending national or international conferences or workshops to present research results from the project.
D. Facilities and Administrative Cost
  G.1. Institutional Overhead Cost (as per rule of the institution; supporting documents required)
  G.2. Project Accounting and Auditing
  G.5. Documentation and Publication Cost
  G.6. Contingency Cost (not exceeding 5% of the total project cost)

Annex IX: Budget estimation and timeline for Collaborative and innovation research grant

University Grants Commission																	
Research Division																	
NEHEP Collaborative Research Grant & Other Research Promotion Grant to Faculties (Nepali Rupees in thousand)																	
Programs	Target*	Year I			Year II			Year III			Year IV			Year V			
		Quantity	Rate	Grant Amount	Quantity	Rate	Grant Amount	Quantity	Rate	Grant Amount	Quantity	Rate	Grant Amount	Quantity	Rate	Grant Amount	Grant Amount
Collaborative and Innovation Research Grant					12			12			12						
Research Based on Wet laboratories					7	15000	105000	7	15000	105000	7	15000	105000				315000
Research Based on Social Survey					3	10000	30000	3	10000	30000	3	10000	30000				90000
Research Based on Dry Lab					2	5000	10000	2	5000	10000	2	5000	10000				30000
Sub-total							**145000**			**145000**			**145000**				**435000**
Other Research Promotion Grant to Faculties																	
Technical Innovation and Scientific Investigation in National Priority Areas		4	12500	50000	4	12500	50000	4	12500	50000	4	12500	50000	4	12500	50000	250000
Collaborative Research Grant		7	2000	14000	10	2000	14000	10	2000	14000	10	2000	14000	10	2000	14000	94000
Faculty Research Grant		35	300	10500	35	300	10500	35	300	10500	35	300	10500	35	300	10500	52500
Small RDI Grant		50	150	7500	50	150	7500	50	150	7500	50	150	7500	50	150	7500	37500
Specialized Research Lab		3	10000	30000	3	10000	30000	3	10000	30000	3	10000	30000	3	10000	30000	150000
Sub-total							**38000**	2450000		**38000**	2450		**38000**			**118000**	**584000**
Total							**183000**			**183000**			**183000**				**1019000**

*UGC may revise and reallocate the number of grants under Wet-based, Social Survey and Dry-lab based depending upon the application received.

PART II: ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT PROGRAM

Acronyms and Abbreviations

HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HERP	Higher Education Reforms Project
NEHEP	Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program
RMC	Research Management Cell
SHEP	Second Higher Education Project
SOPG	Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines
UGC	University Grants Commission

Section I: Introduction

1.1. Background

One of the important roles of the University Grants Commission (UGC), as envisioned in its Act 2050 (1993 AD), is to support research and innovation in universities in Nepal. This support is an integral part of enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education in the country. Since its inception, UGC has been providing several grants to faculty and students. UGC has also been supporting activities related to research and quality of education in the country's higher education institutions (HEIs).

The Second Higher Education Project (SHEP), 2007-2014, the World Bank –supported a major reform initiative of the Government of Nepal, helped to enhance the capacity of UGC as well as to expand research activities of faculty members and students in higher education institutions. UGC has established a Research Division as a permanent functional entity for facilitating policy formulation and management of its research support and fellowship programs. It has set up a comprehensive research funding structure consisting of the Research Division, the Evaluation Committee, and various subject area-specific Cluster Committees for effective and efficient management of funds. It has helped HEIs to strengthen their research capacity by supporting the establishment of research management cells (RMCs).[31] Precisely, the SHEP research support aimed at improving the quality of higher education teaching and learning practices by substantiating research culture in the university education system, and thus, making higher education more relevant to national needs and priorities.

As a successor program of SHEP, Higher Education Reforms Project (HERP), 2015-2020, further helped HEIs to strengthen their research activities. The major objectives of HERP were systemic/institutional reform; improvement of quality, relevance and efficiency of higher education; support to underprivileged students for equitable access; and promotion of research, innovation and academic excellence.

Drawing on the experience and outcomes of SHEP and HERP, the government of Nepal signed an agreement with the World Bank on 19 August 2021 to conduct Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program (NEHEP). The Program Development Objectives are to strengthen market relevance and quality of higher education, boost collaborative research and innovation, and enhance equitable access for underprivileged and disaster affected groups. The NEHEP (2021-2026) supports the Government's National Higher Education Program (Framework) (NHEP) under four major areas for reform:
- Improved labor-market relevance, **entrepreneurship**, and collaborative Research

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[31] RMCs of the HEIs willing to participate in the entrepreneurship support programs will have to revise their scope of work to cater the entrepreneurship development.

- Strengthening governance and financing of higher education
- Widening access to quality higher education for disadvantaged Students
- Extending digitization of higher education

The funding of NEHEP is based on six important disbursement linked indicators (DLIs). DLI 2 focuses on collaborative research and entrepreneurship programs. Collaborative research and entrepreneurship should address the aspiration of higher education for a high impact on the national economy. This SOPG outlines the standards, operational policies and guidelinesUGC follows for implementation in relation to promoting entrepreneurship programs through all eligible public institutions and through private institutions by forming partnership with public institutions.

1.2 Focus of entrepreneurship support program

The UGC funding for entrepreneurship support draws on the objectives of the National Higher Education Program (Framework) (2021-2030) and the Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program (2021-2026) currently under implementation. The entrepreneurship support focuses on attaining the following:
- Increase the focus of higher education on entrepreneurship and produce educated youths that are relevant to the market needs of the present and near future.
- Drive for a shift in focus on university education from degree-based mindset to enterprise and employment-based mindset.
- Provide knowledge, skills and exposure to students, recent graduates and young faculty members for establishing enterprises that are relevant to the market.
- Promote critical and creative thinking in order to stimulate among students the development of an entrepreneurial culture that can respond to the pressures of globalization. Accordingly, inspire graduates to see and explore more opportunities in the enterprise sector in the domestic market.
- Promote entrepreneurship as a catalyst for sustainable development, inclusive economic growth, social inclusion and climate change adaption.
- Strive for promoting an entrepreneurial environment that requires transforming the entire ecosystem including the roles of national policies, government bodies, HEIs, students, business sector and the community.

1.3 Guiding principles for entrepreneurship support program

UGC employs the following set of principles in selection, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of entrepreneurship support programs and related activities.
- Entrepreneurship development can be viewed as a pyramid having three tiers, namely, knowledge, skill and practice (Figure 1). The UGC support will accordingly be on these three tiers of K-S-P. The **knowledge tier will focus on entrepreneurship education**. This will be the broadest spectrum. This category can cover the sensitization and training of faculty members and development of course materials as outlined in NEHEP to the extent of entrepreneurship development. The skill tier focuses on providing **skills, which are necessary to establish enterprises, to the prospective entrepreneurs**. Hands-on

experience, practical training,[32] exposure to enterprises, workshops will fall into this category. This will cover the training of students, recent graduates and young faculty members as outlined in the NEHEP.[33] Business incubation centers will be established. The practice tier will ride on top of the pyramid. In this tier, the focus will be on real development of enterprises. Start-up support will be provided at this stage. Seed funds as outlined in NEHEP will fall into this category.
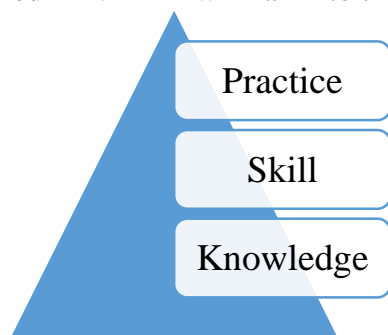

Figure 1: The knowledge-skill-practice (K-S-P) pyramid for entrepreneurship education

- UGC will also focus on increasing the width of coverage. Width of coverage will be increased through a gated[34] approach that relies on competition and competence. In order to receive the UGC support, applicants should demonstrate the acquisition of a minimum level of competence (discussed further in section 2.2, Step 3). Preferential treatments will be given to disadvantaged groups to ensure equitable access.
- For the start-up enterprises, small, medium and large enterprises (SMLEs) will be prioritized. While new start-ups are important, their sustainability is equally important. Start-ups will thus require not only the vision and commitment but also the financial investment from the promoters.
- UGC will provide support to HEIs, which in turn will collaborate and co-work with the private sector to promote entrepreneurship in Nepal through the promotion of knowledge, skills and practice, and to maximize financing for development (MFD).
- UGC grants will be conditional and will be provided by classifying them into either one-time or recurrent for a specified number of years. Start-ups should strive to sustainably operate and flourish for years beyond UGC's support.

1.4 Key intervention areas for entrepreneurship development

UGC will support to start-ups and has identified the following key intervention areas for entrepreneurship development.

1. Support to build institutional infrastructure to enable start-ups

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[32] For example, an online shopping business may require training for digital payment, digital store management, home delivery and inventory management.

[33] Unless otherwise mentioned in the NEHEP, "recent" means graduating within the last 5 years and "young" means faculties with the age limit of 40 years.

[34] The term "gated" is used here to indicate that the program support will not be a blanket support to everybody but will cover all who enter into a gate.

a. Creation of incubation facilities for nurturing innovation and start-ups with possibility to establish them off-campus.
b. Making the facilities accessible for extended hours and days to students, staff, faculties and recent graduates.
c. Mentoring and other relevant services will be available at those facilities

2. Nurturing innovations and start-ups
a. Establish processes and mechanisms for easy creation and nurturing of start-ups/ enterprises by students, recent graduates, faculties and staff
b. Provision of semester/year break to focus on start-ups without having any penalty towards the academic degree
c. Provision of accommodation to the entrepreneurs within/ outside campus during incubation

3. Intellectual property right, patent and ownership of technology/ process developed
a. To be jointly owned by inventors and the institute
b. To be owned by the inventor only if the innovation/invention happens outside campus facility
c. In case of disputes, UGC will work to resolve the disputes in an amicable way.

4. Organizational capacity, human resources and incentives
a. Recruit staff with strong innovation and entrepreneurial/ industrial experience, behavior and attitude to help foster innovation and entrepreneurship
b. Work in coherence and cross departmental linkage
c. Guest lectures from eternal subject matters, experts for strategic advice and skills that are not available internally
d. Academic and non-academic reward system to attract and retain right people

5. Pedagogy and learning interventions for entrepreneurship development
a. Entrepreneurship education to students at curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular level
b. Diversified approach with cross-disciplinary learning using mentors, labs, case studies
c. Pedagogical changes to ensure the maximum number of student projects and innovation

1.5 Implementation arrangement

UGC is responsible for overall implementing this program. This SOPG document shall be regarded as the official procedure to be followed by all staff of UGC to the extent and scope applicable. Ignorance of this document will not immunize any activities, procedures or actions that are contrary to this document. This document shall be publicly disseminated through the UGC website. This SOPG will be reviewed and revised by UGC in consultation with the World Bank as per needs of the evolving environment in the implementation of entrepreneurship support program.

Section II: Guidelines for Entrepreneurship support

2.1. Institutional framework for entrepreneurship support

A seven-step procedure framework for administering the entrepreneurship support fund through UGC is illustrated in Figure 2. Entrepreneurship support funds will be provided towards the knowledge, skill and practice tiers. Two types of grant will be provided for the knowledge tier and one each will be provided for the skill and the practice tiers.

Level	Major steps of Workflow	Institutional scope, roles and responsibilities			
		UGC [Research Division]	**HEI/RMC**	**Students, Recent Graduates, Young Faculties**	**Partner HEI/ Individual Expert/ Private sector**
Knowledge	**Step 1: Roster preparation**	• Invite LOI • Evaluate LOI • Publish the Roster	• Decide for entrepreneurship education and training • Submit LOI		
	Step 2: Course Content development	**Course content development Grant** • Invite proposal • Provide feedback to proposal • Decide the amount of Content Development Grant • Disbursement of grant	• Prepare and submit proposal • Hire external experts • Prepare standard course content for both a not for credit training course and for a credit course		• Provide expert consultation to develop the course content.
	Step 3: Course conduction	• Record the list of trainees • Monitor the training • Provide the Course Conduction Grant (knowledge)	• Develop a standard evaluation criteria • Publish notice and select trainees • Conduct training • Engage external experts • Evaluate the trainees	• Attend the course • Attend the evaluation • Proceed if passed or repeat	• Teach, share experience • Facilitate industry and market exposure.
Skill	**Step 4: Pre-incubation**	• Get and compile the list of successful trainees • Monitor the pre-incubation • Provide the Pre-incubation grant (skill)	• Report the list of successful trainees to UGC (with rank) • Team formation • Pre-incubate the teams • Engage experts and mentors	• Get immersed in the pre-incubation • Brainstorm start-up ideas • Prepare proposals	• Teach, share experience • Facilitate industry and market exposure. • Provide mentoring and intensive coaching.
	Step 5: Idea bank and shortlisting	• Form an idea bank and populate it with short-listed proposals • Decide max. number of Seed Fund Grant • Evaluate and select proposals for funding • Cross-fertilize similar proposals	• Develop a basis for evaluating proposals • Short-list the proposals • Forward the short-listed proposals to UGC • Assist to refine proposals •	• Refine proposals	
Practice	**Step 6: Incubation and start-up**	• Classify into small, medium and large • Issue offer letter for Seed Fund Grant • Review the response to the offer • Provide the Seed Fund Grant (practice) • Support for IPR and Patents	• Submit response to offer with pledge • Sign the tripartite agreement • Incubate the selected teams • Receive grant on installments and release to the start-up • Support for IPR and Patents	• Submit the pledge and enter into the agreement • Provide financial contribution • Intensively work towards the start-up • Aim for patent and IPR	• Provide mentoring and intensive coaching. • MoUs and agreements by various private sectors and financing institutes • Support for IPR and Patents

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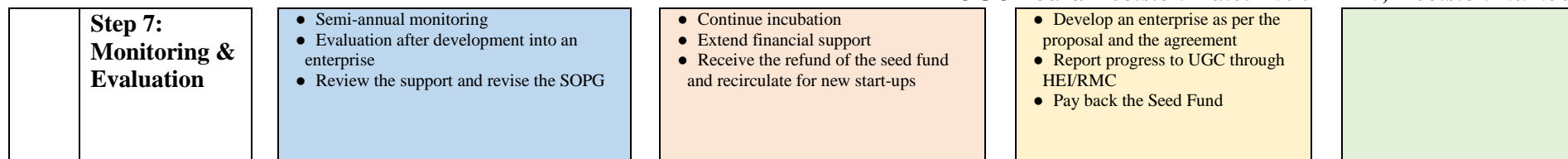| **Step 7:**
Monitoring &
Evaluation | • Semi-annual monitoring
• Evaluation after development into an enterprise
• Review the support and revise the SOPG | • Continue incubation
• Extend financial support
• Receive the refund of the seed fund and recirculate for new start-ups | • Develop an enterprise as per the proposal and the agreement
• Report progress to UGC through HEI/RMC
• Pay back the Seed Fund | |

Figure 2: Framework for administering the entrepreneurship support of UGC

2.2. Activity-wise guidelines

Step 1: Roster preparation of participating HEIs

A. Entrepreneurship support programs will be executed through participating HEIs that demonstrate a keen interest to work on entrepreneurship promotion. UGC will invite Letter of Intent (LOI) from the individual HEI/RMC that have established a functional RMC.

B. LOIs will be evaluated by UGC through the Research Division. Only successful HEIs/RMC will be included into the **roster of participating HEIs**. UGC will update the roster annually. UGC aims to include around 60 competitively selected HEIs/RMC in the roster in two years. .

C. Only HEIs/RMC included in the roster will be eligible to participate or the various grants towards entrepreneurship support.

D. The main parameters for preparing LOI are presented below. As a further guidance, these aspects are elaborated in **Annex A**, which presents the basis of evaluating the LOIs.

- **Basic information of the HEI/RMC**: (i) RMC establishment date; (ii) Total faculty members; (iii) Faculty members involved in (a) research, (b) entrepreneurship; (c) collaboration with other academic institutions; d) collaboration with enterprises; iv) accomplishments of RMC.

- **Information specific to entrepreneurship**: (i) one-page vision paper for conducting the entrepreneurship development program; (ii) one-page strategy paper to promote partnership with private sector, to develop relevant course content and to engage experts during content preparation, training and incubation; and (iii) other information supportive to develop entrepreneurship.

Step 2: Course Content development (Knowledge tier)

- UGC will invite a proposal from HEIs/RMC in the roster list for developing the content for entrepreneurship education and training.
- The proposal should include all necessary and relevant information including:
  - o **Overall execution plan and vision**: RMC of HEIs will have the primary responsibility to develop course contents that will promote entrepreneurship education through knowledge and training. Contribution of RMC in the overall execution of content development, training conduction and incubation shall be well reflected in the proposal.
  - o **Collaboration**: HEIs/RMCs are encouraged to collaborate among HEIs in Nepal, universities abroad and private enterprises in Nepal and abroad.
  - o **Involvement of experts during course development and training**: The HEIs/RMCs are encouraged to develop the course content by mobilizing experts in related fields, both in-house and external. Experts should also be involved as trainers and mentors.

- o **Course content development plan**: i) subjects; ii) contact hour; iii) mode of teaching and learning; v) incubation and mentoring facility; vi) fee structure; vii) distribution materials to students; viii) exposure to enterprises and field excursion; ix) number of trainees; and x) qualification of trainers.

- Design of **course content** shall be aligned to develop entrepreneurship among the trainees. The training content may be categorized into basic and advanced packages. A basic package should be integrated into the mainstream academic curriculum to promote entrepreneurship education. The advanced package (non-credit) shall have at least 40 contact hours. An objective evaluation system shall be developed to candidly evaluate the trainees. Only the successful candidates having secured the minimum marks shall be issued with a certificate of completion. The **course content shall cover all relevant subjects including but not limited to the following**:
  - o Entrepreneurship ideas and possibilities
  - o Law related including relevant acts, company registration and operation
  - o Accounting and finance related including account keeping, audit, share capital, banking system and loans
  - o Economy and market related including demand, supply, import, export, trading, competition, branding, trade mark, patent
  - o Business related including stores, go-downs, delivery, customs, wholesale, retail, profit, income tax, VAT, dealers
  - o Business ethics
  - o Labor force management including socio-economics, human capital, public relations
  - o Community empowerment and promotion of local economy
  - o Corporate social responsibility
  - o Environmental and social safeguard
  - o Basic technologies including construction, electricity, utilities, vehicles, machineries
  - o Digital technology including computer, internet, email, website, online shopping, online payment
  - o Raw materials and resources required for starting new companies
  - o Climate change, its global and local impacts, adaptation and mitigation
  - o Market and marketing concepts

- The advanced course content shall be equivalent to the standard of a senior undergraduate or graduate course. It should be competent, relevant and state-of-the-art. For this, external experts shall be engaged during content development either through partnership with relevant institutions or through individual consultants or both.
- Content Development Grant is aimed to support the cost towards the purchase of academic contents, cost of human resources (including transportation and accommodation) and event organization cost. At least 25% of the Grant amount should be spent towards external experts.[35] Accordingly, the maximum amount of Content Development Grant to HEI/RMC will not exceed four times the cost incurred on hiring external experts.

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[35] External experts shall not be a full-time faculty or staff of the concerned HEI. External experts may be either academic or non-academic. The academic experts shall have either a PhD degree or have a master's degree with 5 years' work experience. They should have at least 3 years' work experience in full-time teaching or shall have published at least two papers as the first author in SCI indexed international journals.

- UGC will set the maximum limit of Content Development Grant. The limit is presently allocated as NPR **15 lakhs**. The minimum of the actual expenses towards the experts or this limit will be provided by UGC to HEI/RMC.
- Content Development Grant is **NOT recurrent** for an HEI/RMC.

Step 3: Course conduction (Knowledge tier)

- HEIs/RMC that are in the roster and have successfully developed the course content for entrepreneurship training are eligible to apply for the **Course Conduction Grant**.
- Subjected to the satisfactory performance, the course conduction grant may be **recurrent** for an HEI/RMC for a maximum of **three** times (three years).
- HEIs shall develop a **standard selection criterion** for selecting the trainees. The criterion shall be in line with this SOPG and any revision thereto. The trainees must be Nepali citizens.
- The Selection criterion should give an equal opportunity to the students from private HEIs to enter into the competition, with no additional cost to the students.
- HEIs through RMC will be responsible for selecting eligible trainees through a fair and objective competition by following the standard selection criterion.
- To ensure sustainability by having a sense of ownership, each selected applicant shall pay a registration fee of not less than NPR 500 and not more than NPR 1000 as set by HEI/RMC. 50% of this fee will be waived for female and disadvantaged applicants.
- HEIs shall duly report the list of applicants and the list of selected trainees to UGC.
- UGC may monitor the selection process and evaluate the selected trainees, when necessary.
- A standard intake for a course comprises maximum 30 trainees even though the actual number may be less.
- Course Conduction Grant will be provided for conducting the training based on the number of participants. UGC will provide this grant as **NPR 10,000** per trainee after the training classes are started. The grant is meant to support the cost of expert trainers and hence HEI/RMC are encouraged to engage expert trainers. This grant is **recurrent** subject to the satisfactory performance.
- When physical involvement of experts is not practical, content delivery may be performed through a blended mode (physical + online).
- HEIs/RMC are required to evaluate the trainees after completion of the training program. Results should be published with ranks. The evaluation/assessment shall be fair and objective. The results should be duly reported to UGC.

Step 4: Pre-incubation (Skill tier)

- For the successful trainees from the previous step, HEIs/RMC should invite preliminary proposals for business ideas. Hints for the ideas should be provided by HEI/RMCs and the

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The non-academic expert shall have a minimum of 5 years of outstanding experience of successfully running an enterprise (as an entrepreneur) that is duly registered under the law of Nepal and also to the tax office of Nepal. The non-academic expert may also be an employee of the government, public or private institutions in Nepal or abroad at a minimum of officer level for at least 5 years and have outstanding exposure towards entrepreneurship promotion (e.g., a banker or a business manager). Moreover, the non-academic expert may be a leader who served as an elected mayor or deputy mayor of the local levels or the MP of the provincial or federal parliament.

experts engaged by them. Successful trainees shall be provided an opportunity to form teams if they wish to develop a start-up as a team effort. For this SOPG purpose, a team would therefore be composed of a single or multiple trainees.

- To ensure sustainability by having a sense of ownership, all team members shall pay a registration fee of not less than NPR 1000 and not more than NPR 2000 as set by the HEI/RMC. 50% of this fee will be waived for female and disadvantaged applicants.
- HEI/RMC should **incubate (pre-incubation)** the teams through boot camps, individual mentoring, specialized coaching, placement training, field excursion, and business research. HEI/RMCs are encouraged to establish Incubation Centers as formal facilities. The UGC may extend additional support towards establishing Incubation Centers.
- The teams may develop business ideas on a wide range of subject areas and hence may require individual/customized counselling/coaching/training.
- The teams should be groomed to prepare a sound business idea and prepare a professional proposal. For this purpose, UGC will provide **Pre-Incubation Grant**.
- Pre-incubation Grant will be provided based on the number of teams[36] (enterprise proposals). The Grant will be provided to the HEI/RMC as **NPR 50,000** per enterprise proposal. The grant is meant to support the cost of expert trainers and the associated direct expenditure for materials purchase, transportation, laboratory expenses and field investigation. HEI/RMC are encouraged to engage expert trainers. This grant is **recurrent** subject to the satisfactory performance.

Step 5: Idea Bank and Short-Listing for Seed Fund Grant (Practice tier)
- RMCs will formally invite application calls for Seed Fund Grant to establish an enterprise (enterprise proposal) from among the trainee students, recent graduates and young faculties who have successfully completed the pre-incubation program.
- HEIs through RMC will be responsible for selecting a designated number[37] of short-listed teams (enterprise proposals) through a fair and objective competition.
- HEIs shall develop a standard basis for marking and ranking the enterprise proposals. The basis shall be in line with this SOPG. Focus on climate change adaption and mitigation shall also be reflected. Similarly, equitable access to disadvantaged groups should be practiced.
- Each HEI can forward a maximum of five proposals (in the order of ranking) to UGC for seed fund competition. Each proposal shall have a sound vision and concrete plan for a start-up.
- The short-listed proposals will be compiled at UGC by formulating an Idea Bank. When registered in the Idea Bank, the enterprise ideas developed through a rigorous process of entrepreneurship education and pre-incubation will be preserved as the public property. In case the team developing the idea is unable to establish a start-up within 2 years of submitting the proposal to UGC, the idea will be the property of UGC. If the idea is later developed into an enterprise, an acknowledgement will be provided to the idea developers.

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[36] In this SOPG, an applicant team can be an individual trainee or a group of trainees working towards a single enterprise proposal. To constitute a team, the candidate should have passed the entrepreneurship training program. However, this criterion will not limit those candidates to engage any partners either trained or untrained.

[37] HEI/RMC are encouraged to select and incubate a greater number of enterprise proposals than those receiving the Seed Fund Grant from UGC.

Step 6: Incubation and Start-up (Seed Fund Grant for practice tier)

- From among the short-listed proposals forwarded by the HEIs, UGC will make the final selection.
- For the final selection, UGC will set a marking scheme with a minimum qualification criterion (as shown in **Annex B**).
- A maximum number of Seed Fund Grants will be decided by the UGC on an annual basis. Irrespective of the maximum number limit, only the teams securing the minimum qualification requirement will be awarded with seed fund.
- UGC may cross-fertilize business ideas from among the HEIs/RMC. Opportunity will be given to the applicants with similar ideas to meet and discuss between each other. Similar ideas may be clubbed to form a single enterprise.
- The marking scheme (as shown in **Annex B**) will be based on:
    - Overall quality, robustness and clarity of the proposal
    - Business plan and prospect
    - Degree of preparation, commitment and confidence
    - Financial contribution of the applicant[38]
    - Qualification of the application as demonstrated by academic background, training and aptitude
    - Support, mentoring and association of the HEI/RMC
    - Partnership and collaboration with other enterprises or institutions
    - Scale of investment, return prospect and degree of scalability including the potential for economic and employment contribution
    - Contribution towards climate change adaption and mitigation
    - Contribution towards local community, disadvantaged groups and regions
- A maximum of 60% cost towards establishing a start-up enterprise will be provided through the seed fund. Not less than 30% (50% of the support) shall flow towards the capital expenditure of the start-up enterprise and maximum 30% (50% of the support) may be spent for **incubating**[39] the start-up. The remaining cost shall be borne by the applicant.
- HEI/RMC may support the applicant towards the cost bearing responsibility of the applicant through one of the following: i) its own source; ii) through the revolving fund generated from previous years; iii) through the dividend earned from previous start-ups; and iv) partnership with business community, industries or other private sectors.
- The seed fund provided to the applicant shall be paid back to the participating HEI in 3 years (with no interest and fees). HEI will utilize the returned fund as a revolving fund to support a new batch of trainees. The project is expected to reach the break-even point in 3-5 years of their incubation. The seed fund provided shall be paid back to the participating HEIs after 3-5 years as agreed in MoU signed by the individual/team and participating HEIs. HEI will utilize the returned fund as a revolving fund to support new batch of

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[38] A guarantee by the HEI/RMC to bear the financial contribution of the applicant should suffice to get full mark for this criterion.

[39] The incubation cost will include the cost for expert's services, consumables, trials, models, proto type development, laboratory testing, field expenses, research related, business registration cost, taxes, and the overhead cost of the HEI to support the start-up. The overhead shall not exceed 20% of the incubation expenses.

trainees. HEIs may charge interest rate and late fee if the team/individual fails to comply with the agreed terms and conditions.

- HEI/RMC should extend full support and encouragement for the start-ups to apply for patent and intellectual property rights whenever possible. UGC will also extend necessary support, particularly in coordinating with the government authority for patent and IPR.

Fund release procedure

- UGC will select the successful proposals for **Seed Fund Grant** by classifying into three classes of seed fund in line with the scale of investment. They will be regarded as **Small**, **Medium** and **Large** scale Seed Fund[40]. Each scale will have a preset maximum limit. Presently, the limit is set as NPR **5 lakhs, 20 lakhs and 40 lakhs**, respectively, for small, medium and large scale enterprise scale.
- Once an application is selected for seed fund, UGC will provide an **offer letter**. The offer letter will include any conditions that need to be fulfilled by the applicant and the guardian HEI/RMC before being eligible for the seed fund grant.
- The applicant will fulfill necessary conditions within the stipulated time frame and will submit a **response to the offer** to the guardian HEI/RMC. A **pledge** of fulfilling the conditions shall be included.
- As part of the response to the offer, the guardian HEI/RMC will fulfill the conditions to be met by it. It will include its pledge letter ensuring the fulfillment of conditions and a recommendation letter endorsing the team's response to the offer.
- Based on the duly submitted response to the offer, UGC will invite the applicant and the guardian HEI/RMC to enter into a tripartite contract agreement as a basis for releasing the seed fund. As a promotion of digital technology, UGC may choose an online mode of contract signing.
- The maximum seed fund support (contracted) indicates the maximum ceiling, which may be disbursed in multiple installments. The installments will be conditional to the progress of the applicant towards establishing the start-up enterprise.
- Research Division of UGC will evaluate the progress on a pre-defined duration as per the contract agreement. The progress report will serve as the basis for releasing the next installment.
- In any case, fund disbursement will be need-based and will not exceed the actual expenditure.

Step 7: Monitoring and evaluation

- Appropriate authority of UGC will monitor the progress as stipulated in the contract agreement. A template for progress reporting is presented in **Annex C**.
- An evaluation of a start-up will be made after the start-up develops into a full-fledged (duly registered) enterprise.
- To be evaluated as a satisfactory start-up, it should secure at least 60% marks.

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[40] The terms Small, Medium and Large scale are chosen to have similar connotations to small, medium and large scale enterprises (SMLEs). However, the level of classification into the three classes may be different from elsewhere.

- Monitoring and evaluation will serve as a basis to revise this SOPG. Monitoring will be the basis for releasing the successive installments of the Seed Fund Grant.

Annex A

Basis of evaluating the letter of intent (LOI)

The LOI submitted by each HEI/RMC will be marked by using the following criteria. All HEI/RMCs securing a minimum of 60 out of 100 marks will be included in the roster.

Parameters		Full mark	Marking criteria	Remarks
A. Basic information of the HEI/RMC		**35**		
(i)	RMC establishment date	-		Information only
(ii)	Total faculty members	5	Full mark if >20; prorated if <20	
(iii)	Faculty member directly involved in			
	(a) Research	5	Full mark if >10; prorated if <10	
	(b) Entrepreneurship	5		
	(c) Collaboration with other academic institutions	5	Full mark if >5; prorated if <5	
	(d) Collaboration with enterprises	5	Full mark if >5; prorated if <5	
(iv)	Accomplishments of RMC	10	Full mark if >10; prorated if <5	Only when criteria have been already met[41]
			Full mark if RMC has developed a training content or has established an incubation center or has already signed an MoU with recognized government offices or banks about special entrepreneurship promoting programs	
B. Information specific to entrepreneurship		**65**		
(i)	One-page vision paper for conducting the entrepreneurship development program	25	6 levels of marking (outstanding 25, excellent 20, good 15, satisfactory 10, poor 5 and no vision or missing 0)	
(ii)	One-page strategy paper to promote partnership with private sector, to develop	25	6 levels of marking (outstanding 25, excellent	

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[41] If the criteria are under process, they will not be marked here but can be marked in B (iii).

	relevant course content and to engage experts during content preparation, training and incubation		20, good 15, satisfactory 10, poor 5 and no vision or missing 0)
(iii)	Other information supportive to develop entrepreneurship	10	Subjective marking based on the relevance of such supportive information

Annex B

Marking scheme for Seed Fund Grant

The short-listed proposals forwarded by HEI/RMCs will be evaluated by UGC based on the following scheme. The scheme is designed to regard the excellence of both HEI/RMC and the trainees. The minimum qualification requirement will be 60 marks out of 100. Proposals that secure the minimum mark will be selected for Seed Fund Grant based on their ranking and subjected to the limit of the maximum number of Seed Fund Grants decided by UGC.

Parameters		Full mark	Remarks
A. Quality of the proposal		**30**	
(i)	Academic/professional quality	2	
(ii)	Depth of SWOT and overall analysis	5	
(iii)	Novelty and relevance	5	
(iv)	Business sustainability	5	
(v)	Business Scalability	3	
(vi)	Contribution to community, economy and employment	5	
(vii)	Climate change adaption/mitigation and address to disadvantaged groups	5	
B. Commitment of the promoters		**20**	
(i)	Dedication and career vision	5	
(ii)	Resilience and backup plan	5	
(iii)	Financial contribution	5	
(iv)	Female and disadvantaged group among partners	5	If their composition in the team is 100%, give full mark; prorated for partial composition.
C. Commitment of the HEI/RMC		**30**	
(i)	Facility, services and seriousness	5	HEI/RMCs with already established Incubation center or equivalent will get full mark.
(ii)	Degree of support to the start-up	5	
(iii)	Financial contribution, assurance	5	
(iv)	Compliance to the SOPG	5	
(v)	Track record on training	5	HEI/RMCs with 30 trainees per batch and success rate >80% get full mark.
(vi)	Track record on start-ups	5	HEI/RMCs with at least 5 successful start-ups will get full marks.
D. External support/collaboration		**20**	
(i)	Partnership with the private sector (including market related)	5	
(ii)	Partnership with government (3 levels) and public institutions	5	
(iii)	Partnership with banks and financial institutions	5	
(iv)	Community support and partnership	5	

Annex C

Template for monitoring the progress of seed fund grantees

The progress of the seed fund grantees will be monitored every 6 months. This SOPG, the submitted proposal and the contract agreement will form the primary bases for monitoring and evaluation. The monitoring scheme may be revised by UGC from time to time with and without the prior information to the HEI/RMC and the grantees. In addition to the general evaluation scheme, special or additional evaluation schemes may be implemented to selected grantees. At present, the following template is proposed for monitoring the progress.

Parameters		Full mark	Marking criteria	Remarks
A. Compliance to the entrepreneurship support program of the UGC (this SOPG)		**20**		
(i)	Overall deviation towards the program and expected outcomes	10	No deviation means full mark. Mark will get reduced with deviations.	
(ii)	Deviation on part of the HEI/RMC towards entrepreneurship promotion	5		
(iii)	Deviation on part of the promoters	5		
B. Compliance to the business proposal		**40**		
(i)	Infrastructure, facility and machinery	5	If it complies with the proposal, award full marks.	
(ii)	Legal, financial and other procedures	5		
(iii)	Human resources, financial resources and material resources	5		
(iv)	Production/service and market	5		
(v)	Change in scenario and environment (Emerging challenges and adaptation to them)	5		
(vi)	Plan vs progress comparison a. Activities b. Time c. Cost	5 5 5		
C. Compliance to the agreement		**20**		
(i)	Timeline and milestones	5	If it complies with the proposal, award full marks.	
(ii)	Progress reporting	5		
(iii)	Fund flow and audit	5		
(iv)	Response to the UGC and its instructions	5		
D. Feedback and recommendation from the HEI/REC		**20**		

(i)	Updates on the prospect/adjustment	10	Scenarios may change from what were envisaged initially. This will cause deduction in full mark in the above parameters. To compensate for such deduction owing to changes in external scenario/environment, the UGC may award a maximum of 10 marks with proper justification.	Adjustment will be reflected through positive marking.
(ii)	New associations, partnerships, collaborations, acquisition or other positive developments of special mention	10		Extra marks to encourage new positive developments.

This basis of evaluation will be utilized not only to gauge the progress of the start-ups and the HEI/RECs, but also to revise the entrepreneurship support program of UGC including this SOPG.

Table: Cost Estimations of the Entrepreneurship and Self Employment Program (Amount in NPR in thousands)

SN	Headings	Maximum Celling	No. of Awarding RMC/HEIs		Total cost	Description	Disbursement /Condition
1	**Training Content Development Award (Step-2)**	15,00	70		105,000	Per HEIs/RMCs, no recurrent, to be paid as per actual, at least 25 % cost shall be stayed for external consultants/ specialists	Only one installment, after the development and submission of the content acceptable to the UGC.
				Total	105,000	22.93	
2	**Training Award to HEIs/RMCs**	Participants Unit cost	Year	No of trainees	Total cost	Description	Disbursement /Condition
	i) Course Conduction (Step-3)	10	3	6300	63,000	Depends on number of participants, it could be recurrent.	First tranche 40% after the training classes are started, and second tranche 60% upon submission of the training completion report acceptable to the UGC.
	ii) Pre-incubation (Step-4)	50	3	1600	80,000	Depends on number of proposals in the same enterprise category, it could be recurrent.	First tranche 40% after the training classes are started, and second tranche 60% upon submission of the training completion report acceptable to the UGC.
				Total	143,000	31.22	

	Enterprise Seed Fund (Step-6)	Per Enterprise Seed Grant Cost (Maximum ceiling, NPR)	Duration of Pay Back Period to HEIs (years)	Estimated no of total proposals to be awarded	Total cost	Description (Maximum 60% of the total capital cost of the enterprise)	Disbursement /Condition
3	Small Enterprise	500	3	100	50,000	Depends on the approved individual enterprise proposal(s).	First Installment maximum 40% upon installation of plant and start of the enterprise; and Second Installment 60 % upon start of the production
	Medium Enterprise	2,000	3	40	80,000	Depends on the approved individual enterprise proposal(s).	First Installment maximum 40% upon installation of plant and start of the enterprise; and Second Installment 60 % upon start of the production.
	Large Enterprise	4,000	3	20	80,000	Depends on the approved individual enterprise proposal(s).	First Installment maximum 30% upon installation of plant and start of the enterprise; Second Installment 40 % upon start of the production; and Third Installment 30% after one year of uninterrupted production.
	Total			**160**	**210,000**	45.85	-
	Grand Total				**458,000**		-

Note: Number of courses might be developed, courses conduction, pre-incubation, enterprise proposals, and incubation & startup could not estimated exactly; this is just an estimation and will not be binding in regard to the numbers for funding support.