Qatar National Research Fund

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Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
Content

- Background on QNRF funding
- My own experience in applying
Speaker’s experience

• International funding
  – QNRF (2013) – as project head (Lead PI)
  – Middle East Desalination Research Centre (2003-2006) (as project member)

• International funding reviewers
  – QNRF funding
  – Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology
  – King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals funds
Qatar National Research Fund

Vision:
The Qatar Foundation envisions research as a catalyst for expanding and diversifying the country’s economy; enhancing the education of its citizens and the training of its workforce; and fostering improvements in the health, well-being, environment, and security of its own people and those of the region.

Mission:
QNRF will lead the strategic development of a national research enterprise within Qatar. It is required to work in close cooperation with government ministries and departments that have a legitimate interest in the research enterprise of Qatar.
QNRF Goals:

- Build national human potential by using research funding and other activities to accelerate development of opportunities for education and training in basic and applied research in Qatar.

- Fund research that focuses on related national needs.

- Raise Qatar’s international profile in research and expand non-QNRF funding.
QNRF Programs & Activities

Current:
- National Priorities Research Program.
- Undergraduate Research Experience Program.
- Biannual National Research Survey.
- Conferences and Workshops Sponsorship Program.
- Arab Expatriate Scientists - Fast Track Launch Program.

Tasked:
- Theme Projects Program.
- Distinguished Fellowships.
- Facilitate the application of research results.
- Graduate Research Experience Program.
- Secondary Schools Research Program.
- Young Scientists Research Program.
Undergraduate Research Experience Program (UREP)

The QNRF seeks to stimulate a broad array of undergraduate research opportunities in Education City and Qatar University through faculty- and other researcher-led projects involving one or more students inside Qatar.

The (UREP) promotes “Learning by Doing” mentorship activities as effective methods for undergraduate education. Students gain experience with team-based research collaboration with faculty, graduate students, and other undergraduates or research staff.
QNRF conducts two UREP cycles per year, six UREP cycles have been implemented since the fall of 2006; the seventh cycle is due in October 2009.

So far the following has been achieved:

- 6 cycles were launched.
- 563 proposals were submitted.
- 299 proposals were awarded.
- Around 60 publications so far.
- 781 students awarded and mentored by 325 faculty members.
- US$6,36 million total funded.
National Priorities Research Program (NPRP)
National Priorities Research Program (NPRP)

Overview of NPRP:

- QNRF’s largest grant funding activity.
- Seeking to address key national, regional, and global needs through research.
- Pursuing research opportunities for which Qatar has a comparative advantage.
- QNRF seeks to support a broad variety of projects in basic and applied research in:
  - Natural sciences.
  - Engineering and Technology.
  - Medical and Health sciences.
  - Agricultural sciences.
  - Social sciences.
  - Humanities.
National Priorities Research Program (NPRP)

Benefits of NPRP:

- Service to Qatar.
- Collaboration and sustainability.
- Merit-based research awards.
- Active publication, promotion and outreach.
- Furthering research culture in Qatar.
- Expand knowledge in Qatar.
QNRF accepts individual or collaborative, small or large proposals spanning between one and three years.

QNRF encourages:
- Multi-year, multi-disciplinary, and multi-institutional projects.
- Collaborative projects partnering researchers and academia from different campuses or organizations outside academia.
- Partnerships between institutions in Qatar and outside Qatar.

Awards will be made to institutions and organizations only.
NPRP Proposal

Conditions that must be met:

- At least 50% of the research must be conducted in Qatar by the research team in Qatar, as measured in person-days spent on the project.

- At least 65% of the proposed project funds must be administered by an institution in Qatar and expended within Qatar.

- The Co-LPI must reside in Qatar (but need not be a Qatari citizen).
The National Priorities Research Program – Exceptional Proposals (NPRP-EP) is an extra funding opportunity for proposals of exceptional scientific merit that require funds in excess of the normal level of NPRP funding, QNRF solicits scientists with exceptional ideas, approaches, procedures and models that may solve key issues of national, regional or global interest to apply for the NPRP-EP, it is an additional funding opportunity within the NPRP program. These research projects will require funds of more than US$1.05m, The maximum budget for such proposals is US$5m with maximum project duration of up to five years. All proposals submitted will be peer reviewed by qualified experts. Awards will be granted based on the final decision of QNRF’s steering committee. For more information on the policies and guidelines please review the NPRP-EP RFP.
# NPRP 7th Cycle Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open online registration for LPIs</td>
<td>Always Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online registration of ROs and other key investigators</td>
<td>Always Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open LoI (Letter of Intent) Submission, proposal submission (submission of the LoI will allow the start of proposal preparation), as well as RO vetting* process.</td>
<td>Noon (Doha Time), Tuesday 17th of September 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close LoI Submission</td>
<td>Noon (Doha Time), Tuesday 22nd of October 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DL2: Close LPI Proposal Submission To The RO</td>
<td>Noon (Doha Time), Tuesday 10th of December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DL3: Close RO Final Proposal Submission and Vetting</td>
<td>Noon (Doha Time), Tuesday 7th of January 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineligible Proposals Notification</td>
<td>February 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Proposals Notification, Awards Announced</td>
<td>May 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Payment Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 year Project</th>
<th>2 year Project</th>
<th>3 year Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Year 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Year 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 100% for equipment and any associated material cost, plus up to 50% of the remaining annual budget.</td>
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<td>• 100% for equipment and any associated material cost, plus up to 50% of the remaining annual budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 30% upon receipt and acceptance of the interim progress report.</td>
<td>• 50% upon receipt and acceptance of the 1st interim progress report.</td>
<td>• 50% upon receipt and acceptance of the 1st interim progress report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 20% upon receipt and acceptance of the final report.</td>
<td>• 100% for equipment and any associated material cost, plus up to 50% of the remaining annual budget upon acceptance of the Annual Progress Report.</td>
<td>• 50% upon receipt and acceptance of the 2nd interim progress report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Year 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Year 3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 100% for equipment and any associated material cost, plus up to 50% of the remaining annual budget upon acceptance of the Annual Progress Report.</td>
<td>• 30% upon receipt and acceptance of the 2nd interim progress report</td>
<td>• 100% for equipment and any associated material cost, plus up to 50% of the remaining annual budget upon acceptance of the 2nd Annual Progress Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 30% upon receipt and acceptance of the 2nd interim progress report</td>
<td>• 20% upon receipt and acceptance of the final progress report</td>
<td>• 30% upon receipt and acceptance of the 3rd interim progress report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 20% upon receipt and acceptance of the final progress report</td>
<td></td>
<td>• 20% upon receipt and acceptance of the final progress report</td>
</tr>
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</table>
NPRP Achievements

– QNRF Launched three NPRP cycles since April 2007.
– QNRF received over 700 proposals through its in-house developed submission solution.
– Each proposal was sent to 5 internationally renowned PRs.
– Strict PRs screening criteria were applied (at least assistant professor with min. 20 publications, has no conflict of interest, etc).
– Funding was increased from US$25 to US$ 86 million per cycle.
– Size of grants per year was increased from $250k to $350k per project.
# 1st & 2nd NPRP Cycles General Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>1st Cycle</th>
<th>2nd Cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letters of Intent (LOIs)</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>submitted Proposals</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineligible Proposals</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitting Institutions</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants</td>
<td>1537</td>
<td>3274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating Institutions</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions Countries</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results of the NPRP 2nd cycle

- Vetted proposals (Total=489)
- Winning proposals (Total=93)

- Natural Sciences: 87 (18)
- Engineering and Technology: 230 (41)
- Medical and Health Sciences: 100 (22)
- Agricultural Sciences: 56 (8)
- Social Sciences: 8 (1)
- Humanities: 8 (3)
QNRF website ( www.qnrf.org )

To sign in/sign up: (www.qnrfsubmission.info/prog/)

Welcome to Qatar National Research Fund

Established in 2006, Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) aims to advance knowledge and education by providing support to researchers.

It administers funding for original, competitively selected research and fosters collaborations within academia, and through public/private partnership.

QNRF actively seeks internationally recognized researchers however it is dedicated to funding research that meets the needs of Qatar.

QNRF is a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, established by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of Qatar and chaired by Her Highness, Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Mисned.
## Successful applicants from Malaysia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>LPI / PFM</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPRP 08 - 227 - 5 - 042</td>
<td>LINGUISTIC SEXISM AND GENDER ROLE STREOTYPING IN QATARI ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING SCHOOL RESOURCES</td>
<td>Dr. Bahiyah Hamid</td>
<td>Award Completed</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M University at Qatar (UKM)</td>
<td>View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPRP 4 - 1207 - 2 - 474</td>
<td>Wireless Biotelemetry for Ubiquitous Healthcare Application</td>
<td>Dr. Farid Touati</td>
<td>Award Active</td>
<td>Qatar University (UPM)</td>
<td>View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPRP 5 - 1425 - 2 - 607</td>
<td>Development and surface interaction study of Low-Fouling Nanofiltration Membranes for Desalination</td>
<td>Prof. Abdul Wahab Mohammad</td>
<td>Award Active</td>
<td>Qatar University (UKM)</td>
<td>View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPRP 6 - 931 - 2 - 382</td>
<td>Developing Transition Metal Dichalcogenide Based Alternative Absorbers (WS2 &amp; MoS2) for Cost Effective Photovoltaic Applications</td>
<td>Dr. Fahhad Alharbi</td>
<td>Award Active</td>
<td>Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (UKM)</td>
<td>View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPRP 6 - 1472 - 2 - 600</td>
<td>VegeBlocks – Innovative use of waste vegetable oil in construction blocks</td>
<td>Dr. James Nicholls</td>
<td>Award Active</td>
<td>Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) QSTP-B (UTP)</td>
<td>View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPRP 5 - 1425 - 2 - 607</td>
<td>Development and surface interaction study of Low-Fouling Nanofiltration Membranes for Desalination</td>
<td>Prof. Abdul Wahab Mohammad</td>
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**Partners:**

Prof. Abdelwahab Aroussi (QU) (until 2013)
Dr. Abdelbaki Benamour (2014-present)
Prof. Nidal Hilal, Swansea University
Project Description: 

Nanofiltration (NF) is recently applied in the treatment of feed water to RO desalination process. Between ultrafiltration (UF) and RO, NF membranes are potent in the rejection of scale forming components, NOM and bio-foulants in the feed. However, the major obstacle for NF membrane application in desalination is membrane fouling which dramatically reduces throughput and performance. In order to optimize the application of NF membranes, it is most realistic of using low-fouling membranes with high permeability and retention. Low-fouling membranes are typically hydrophilic, which is one of the major properties for reducing the adsorption of fouling agents. Besides that, ionic groups or nanoparticle with surface functionalities can be introduced into polymeric membrane for the improvement of membrane surface charge and hence foulant repulsion. This study is intended to develop polymeric membranes with improved hydrophilicity as well as surface charge density in a single preparation step. The membranes will be tested for flux-decline problems typically found in desalination application which is due to the presence of humic acids, inorganics, NOM, biofoulants and anti-corrosion compounds. The use of atomic force microscopy (AFM) will be emphasized in this study to further study the surface forces interaction of the fresh and fouled membrane surface.
# Budget Approved

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>QU</th>
<th>UKM</th>
<th>Swansea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>410,596</td>
<td>54,950</td>
<td>88,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>178,400</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17,768</td>
<td>4,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>12,660</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Cost</td>
<td>120,972</td>
<td>17,850</td>
<td>20,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>722,628</strong></td>
<td><strong>114,568</strong></td>
<td><strong>118,620</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

76% 12% 12%

TOTAL: USD 955,816 or RM 2,963 juta
Advices

• Strong teams with personnel in Qatar and other countries
• Solid track record (in publication at least)
• Good proposal – which will be reviewed by at least 5 researchers from all over the world
• Topic – must show relevance and benefits to Qatar
Any Questions?

Further info:
http://www.qnrf.org/