



UNIVERSITI MALAYA
Research Cluster Office

GUIDELINES

Universiti Malaya Research Excellence Grant 2025

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PART 1 – GRANT APPLICATION

1.1 Universiti Malaya Research Excellence Grant (UMREG) 2025

The Universiti Malaya Research Excellence Grant (UMREG) 2025 aims to drive and empower the quality of research. This grant is designed to boost impactful, excellent and indexed publications; contributes to human capital development; and encourage external collaboration to strengthen strategic research partnerships.

1.2 Theme of Research

The research focus areas will be based on the latest call for proposals while ensuring alignment with UM's 10 thrust areas.

Following the research focus area, each application must align with one (1) of the UM thrust areas listed below:

1. Nuclear energy and new energy transition
2. Food sustainability and security
3. Semiconductor and chips
4. Nanotechnology and quantum exploration
5. Artificial Intelligence and digital robotic realms
6. Space science and new engineering spectrum
7. Defence and security assets and inventory innovation and creation
8. Rare earths and critical minerals
9. Comprehensive medical and health spectrum excellence
10. Social Science Advancement in Economic, Smart Finance, Societal, International Norms and Law, and Geopolitical Spectrum for the Nation and the World

1.3 Research Grant Application Terms and Conditions

Terms and Conditions	Details
Principal Investigator (PI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UM academic staff with permanent or contract status: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Associate Professor, b) Senior Lecturer, or c) Lecturer • For permanent academic staff, a minimum duration of three (3) years before the date of retirement is required. • For contractual academic staff, a remaining minimum appointment period of two (2) years is required. • Should not have any internal or external active grant. • Has achieved the promised output of other internal grant under Research Cluster. • One (1) application per applicant.
Next Appointed Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UM academic staff with permanent or contract status: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Associate Professor, b) Senior Lecturer, or c) Lecturer • For permanent academic staff, a minimum duration of three (3) years before the date of retirement is required. • For contractual academic staff, a remaining minimum appointment period of two (2) years is required.
Co-Researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprise academic staff at all levels and are required to define their roles. • At least one (1) permanent academic staff. • At least one (1) senior academic staff (Professor/Associate Professor). • The project research team must consist at least of five (5) members. • Head of CoE will be appointed as one of the research member of the approved project.

Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers are required to collaborate with at least one (1) international institution/organization or industry. • Researchers are encouraged to collaborate with higher education institutions, government agencies or non-governmental organizations at the national level.
Theme of Research	The research must be related to one (1) of the CoE niche area & research scopes and align with one (1) of the UM thrust areas.
Grant Ceiling	RM100,000.00 a) Option 1: RM 50,000.00 b) Option 2: > RM 50,000.00 - RM 75,000.00 c) Option 3: > RM 75,000.00 - RM 100,000.00 Note: i. Phase 2 allocation will be disbursed upon achieving Phase 1 outputs and utilizing at least 75% of its initial funding. ii. Maximum period to achieve Phase 1 output targets: a) Maximum 18 months for a 24-month project. b) Maximum 24 months for a 36-month project.
Duration (Months)	Option 1: RM 50,000.00 (Maximum 24 months) Option 2: > RM 50,000.00 - RM 75,000.00 (24 months or 36 months) Option 3: > RM 75,000.00 - RM 100,000.00 (24 months or 36 months) Extension: One (1) time with a maximum period of six (6) months only.

1.4 Research Output

Every research project must produce the following research output:

No.	Output to Fulfil	Details	
1.	Journal Publication	RM 50,000.00	i. Phase 1 a) Science & Technology – One (1) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications. b) Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities – One (1) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications/ Scopus-indexed publications. ii. Phase 2 a) Science & Technology – One (1) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications. b) Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities – One (1) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications/ Scopus-indexed publications.

		<p>*Note: At least one (1) of the two (2) publications must be joint publications with international/industry collaborator(s).</p>		
		<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>> RM 50,000.00 – RM 75,000.00</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>i. Phase 1</p> <p>a) Science & Technology – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications.</p> <p>b) Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications/ Scopus-indexed publications.</p> <p>ii. Phase 2</p> <p>a) Science & Technology – One (1) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications.</p> <p>b) Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities – One (1) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications/ Scopus-indexed publications.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>> RM 50,000.00 – RM 75,000.00</p>	<p>i. Phase 1</p> <p>a) Science & Technology – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications.</p> <p>b) Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications/ Scopus-indexed publications.</p> <p>ii. Phase 2</p> <p>a) Science & Technology – One (1) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications.</p> <p>b) Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities – One (1) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications/ Scopus-indexed publications.</p>
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		<p>*Note: At least one (2) of the three (3) publications must be joint publications with international/industry collaborator(s).</p>		
		<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>> RM 75,000.00 – RM 100,000.00</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>i. Phase 1</p> <p>a) Science & Technology – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications.</p> <p>b) Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications/ Scopus-indexed publications.</p> <p>ii. Phase 2</p> <p>a) Science & Technology – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications.</p> <p>b) Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications/ Scopus-indexed publications.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>> RM 75,000.00 – RM 100,000.00</p>	<p>i. Phase 1</p> <p>a) Science & Technology – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications.</p> <p>b) Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications/ Scopus-indexed publications.</p> <p>ii. Phase 2</p> <p>a) Science & Technology – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications.</p> <p>b) Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities – Two (2) Q1/Q2 Web of Science-indexed publications/ Scopus-indexed publications.</p>
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		<p>*Note: At least two (2) of the four (4) publications must be joint publications with international/industry collaborator(s).</p>		
2.	Human Capital Development	One (1) postgraduate student in full-time research mode as a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA).		

3.	Others	One (1) MoA/LoA/Research Agreement. *The MoA must be signed and stamped (by LHDN).
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Note: All outputs are compulsory to be fulfilled within the project period. The project outputs are the shared responsibility of all researchers listed in the submitted proposal.

1.5 Distribution of Allocation

***Approval of yearly allocation is subject to the project performance of the previous year (expenditure, achievement of milestones).**

1.5.1 Vote 11000 Salary and Wages

This vote is only to be used to employ/pay Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs).

The ceiling for salaries and wages is subject to the Guidelines on Recruitment and Appointment of Senior Researcher/Researcher/Assistant Researcher/Project Assistant/Research Assistant set by the University.

Reference: [UM Research Website](#)

1.5.2 Vote 21000 Travelling and Transportation

Covers travel for fieldwork **ONLY**.

Documents required for fieldwork application:

- a) Justification of fieldwork
- b) Schedule of work activities
- c) Letter of invitation from the institution (if applicable)

Application for fieldwork must be submitted thirty (30) working days prior to the travel date.

Ceiling for this vote:

Sciences : 20% of current year allocation

Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities : 40% of current year allocation

This vote does **not cover** expenses related to attachment/visit to any institution or conference/symposium attendance.

1.5.3 Vote 24000 Rental

Rental is allowed for research space, equipment, transportation and other items directly involved in the research. Vehicle rental must be with a licensed transport company.

1.5.4 Vote 27000 Research Material and Supplies

Only research-related expenses are allowed. Purchases of stationery supplies, electronic devices and other ICT equipment, e.g. laptop/desktop/printer/ external hard disk/etc., are not permitted using this grant.

Applications for purchasing specific equipment required for the research work of less than RM3,000 must be made through this vote.

1.5.5 Vote 28000 Maintenance and Minor Repair Services

Only expenses for minor repairs and renovation of buildings, laboratories, equipment or any other research-related items are allowed.

Maintenance cost of existing equipment during the project is allowed. Once the project has been completed, this cost will not be covered by the grant.

1.5.6 Vote 29000 Professional Services

This vote covers costs of printing, hospitality, honorarium for research assistant /professional services/consultancy, data processing, page charge and other services that are related to the research project. It does **not cover** conference fees/proofreading service.

Honorarium Payment Guidelines (Research Assistant):

- a) Honorarium cannot be paid more than three (3) consecutive months or three (3) times to the same person in one (1) financial year.
- b) Honorarium payment that exceeds RM 500 cannot be paid in cash.
- c) Letter of appointment as a temporary research assistant from Head of Research / Head of Department is required for honorarium payment.
- d) Ceiling research assistant honorarium is RM 3000 / month.

Honorarium Payment (respondents / subjects):

- a) Clinical and Non-clinical : RM 50 (max) / session.

Researchers can allocate up to a maximum of total RM20,000.00 (RM10,000.00 each phase) per project for the page charge.

Researchers are encouraged to apply for the JPP Page Charge Fund to cover page charges. For detailed information, please refer to the guidelines available on the [UM Research Website](#)

- 1.6** Phase 2 allocation will be disbursed upon achieving Phase 1 outputs and utilizing at least 75% of its initial funding.

1.7 Announcement of Application Opening and Closing Dates

The opening and closing dates for applications will be announced through UMinfo.

PART 2 – OTHERS

1.1 Reviewer

1.1.1 Selection of Reviewers

- a) The selection of the reviewers will be based on:
- Experts in the research area, OR
 - Experts relevant to the research area, OR
 - Have experience in the research area

1.1.2 Project Assessment

a) Quality of Research Proposal

The first element of the evaluation based on the following aspects:

- SMART objectives

The details of the SMART objectives are as below:

S	Specific, Significant, Stretching - Outline in a clear statement precisely what is required.
M	Measurable, Meaningful, Motivational - Include a measure to enable you to monitor progress and to know when the objective has been achieved.
A	Agreed upon, Attainable, Achievable, Acceptable, Action-Oriented - Objectives can be designed to be challenging, but it is important that failure is not built into objectives. Employees and managers should agree to the objectives to ensure commitment to them.
R	Realistic, Relevant, Reasonable, Rewarding, Results-Oriented - Focus on outcomes rather than the means of achieving them
T	Time-based, Time-bound, Timely, Tangible, Trackable - Agree the date by which the outcome must be achieved.

- Detailed methodology

b) Scientific Merit

This element is related to the final product of the project (results) that will represent the value of the research.

Scientific merit of the evaluation based on the following aspects:

- Commands scientific excellence in relation to the output(s) promised.
- Significant aspects of the project are based on innovative/novel approach.
- The expected result will lead to progress beyond the current state-of-the-art.

1.2 UM Safety & Research Handbook

All applicants are required to acknowledge that they have read, understood and will implement all requirements in UM Safety & Research Handbook. Failure to do so will result in disqualification of the application UM Safety & Research Handbook.

This safety handbook covers the following topics:

1. Individual Responsibility
2. Safety and Health Regulations and Code of Practice in the University
3. Access, Housekeeping and General Safety Rules in Laboratories, Workshops and Stores
4. Safety in the Office, Reading Rooms and Classrooms
5. Safety in Workshops
6. Safety in Laboratories
7. Good Microbiological Practice
8. Waste Disposal
9. Radioactive Materials
10. Genetically Modified Organisms

Further information on safety procedures in specialized facilities, laboratories or workshops should be obtained from the respective unit heads/laboratory supervisors.

Note:

Proof of submission of Notice of Intent [NOI] to IBBC must be attached with your proposal for research involving the use of infectious and potentially infectious agents/materials and biological toxins.

1.3 Research Ethics

All research conducted by staff and students at the university involving human participants and the use of vertebrate animal subjects must be referred to the appropriate ethics committee.

These include all research, qualitative or quantitative, regardless of whether the research is funded by internal/external grants or even unfunded University of Malaya Research Ethics Committee (UMREC).

Note:

- a) If your proposal is successful, please be reminded that researchers are responsible for obtaining the biosafety and ethics approvals. Researchers are to take full responsibility if the project is conducted without approval.
- b) If researchers do not show any proof of biosafety and ethics approvals within six (6) months of grant approval, the research project may be suspended.

1.4 Reallocation of Research Grant

Requirement:

- a) Apply via F1RST (<https://first.um.edu.my/>) with justification and attachment (if any).
- b) Endorsement from the BPGP and maximum additional re-allocation allowed from any vote is 20% only. Example:

The original allocation for Vote 27000 (Supplies and Research Material) for the current phase is RM10,000 Current balance for this vote is insufficient to cover the needs of the research.

The maximum additional reallocation allowed from any vote is 20% from RM10,000 = RM2,000 only.

1.5 Progress Monitoring

Principal Investigators (PI) is responsible in ensuring good progress of the project. Monitoring of each project must comply with all monitoring methods set by the university.

All progress reports must be submitted to the Research Grant Management Division and carbon copy (cc) to the Research Cluster Office.

a) Progress Report

A progress report must be submitted every six (6) months. The account will be frozen automatically for those who fail to submit the report on the pre-determined dates.

[Note: Approval of yearly allocation is subject to the project performance of the previous year (expenditure, achievement of milestones)].

b) Final Report

A final report must be submitted at the end of the project. Justification will be required if the agreed upon research output is not achieved in the scheduled period.

Note: Researchers who fail to produce committed research outputs may not be considered for any new UM internal grant applications for a period of up to 3 years.

1.6 Extension of Research Grant

The application must be submitted one (1) month before the expiry date of the project. Any application submitted later than the duration stated may be REJECTED.

Documents required:

- a) Endorsement from reporting PTj.
- b) Justification for extension.
- c) Latest progress report. Attach the latest Gantt chart and budget details from the F1RST System.

The maximum period allowed for extension is six (6) months only.

1.7 Transfer of Balance into another Research Grant

The current balance in UMREG 2025 cannot be transferred to other research grants.

1.8 Acknowledgement of Research Output

The publication from this grant must acknowledge UMREG as the primary source of funding. A maximum of three (3) grants are allowed to be acknowledged and UMREG must be the first grant in the sequence of acknowledgment.

Only publications that are produced after the grant has been awarded and directly resulting from the research work under this grant will be accepted as output. Action will be taken against inappropriate grant acknowledgement.

Example of acknowledgement:

*This research is supported by Universiti Malaya Research Excellence Grant 2025
(Project Ref No. in RGMS)*
