

Research & Development Office Technology Transfer Office (TTO) Initiative *Guidelines*

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Summary

Overview

The Research and Development Office (RDO) of the Ministry of Education (MoE) was established in 2017 to transform the Research and Development (R&D) ecosystem and enhance the research capacity and capability of public universities in Saudi Arabia.

An important part of creating an effective and highly performing R&D ecosystem is to enable universities to develop an office that serves the needs and requirements of industry. Therefore, the RDO is launching the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) initiative to provide KSA public universities with funding to establish or develop an office responsible for technology transfer and other aspects of commercializing research.

Background

The TTO initiative consists of annual grants that allow KSA public universities to develop a TTO or enhance their current office. TTOs engage in a variety of commercial activities that are meant to facilitate the process of bringing research developments to market, serving as a gateway between academia and industry.

The TTO aims to:

- a. Achieve long-term returns for universities, such as sustained partnerships, cultural change, job creation, and societal well-being.
- b. Facilitate the process of transferring research and technology to industry
- c. Enhance innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity
- d. Support in the development of spin-offs to contribute to the economic development of KSA

Initiative Outline

Support is provided to a single university (**Model A**) or a group of universities (**Model B**) to establish or expand TTOs to improve interaction between industry and researchers with regard to transferring intellectual property and research outcomes. This will improve the capacity and capabilities of universities allowing them to actively engage with industry and business, and in maximizing commercialization opportunities.

Even though a TTO's main purpose is to commercialize university research, they do engage in numerous activities that also support students and faculty in the entire technology transfer process.

This initiative has been developed to give the opportunity for KSA public universities to select one of the following two options depending on the grant's alignment with university objectives:

1. **Model A:** Establishing an independent TTO at the university or enhancing their currently operational TTO
2. **Model B:** Establishing a collaborative TTO with multiple KSA public universities

TTO candidates for this initiative will be expected to establish an office or enhance their current office in line with the following major objectives:

- Creating and maintaining industry partnerships

- Supporting in intellectual property policies and development
- Providing counseling and incubation for startups
- Reduce time needed to transfer research into commercialized products

For Model A, the grant is open to a single KSA public university looking to establish a new TTO or develop their current TTO. For Model B, the grant is open to a group of KSA public universities aiming to collaborate with one another to develop a collaborative TTO. **It is the responsibility of the university to submit the application.** Details on the initiative are provided in subsequent sections of this document.

Types of Awards

Two types of awards will be introduced:

Model A: SAR 500,000 over the course of one year

- For universities seeking to develop a TTO or enhance their current TTOs
- For smaller-scale and independent TTOs

Model B: SAR 1,500,000 over the course of one year

- For universities seeking to develop a collaborative TTO
- For larger-scale and collaborative TTOs

Funding

Funding Allocation Overview

Model A: SAR 500,000 over the course of one year

The grant duration for each office must be 12 months. The university is responsible for how to invest the funds allocated for the initiative for the purposes of establishing a new TTO or enhancing their current TTO. The total amount granted by the RDO for each office will be determined on an office basis, and universities awarded the grant will be allocated 25% of the total funding at the beginning of the award.

All funding requests must be submitted in accordance with the scope of Model A TTOs, and universities must submit an outline of the priorities and uses of such funds. Note that the set amount of funding to be distributed at the beginning of the grant may be subject to change in the case that the university fails to comply with the Model A TTO Guidelines.

Model B: SAR 1,500,000 over the course of one year

The grant duration for the collaborative office must be 12 months. The universities are responsible for how to invest the funds allocated for the initiative for the purposes of developing a collaborative joint TTO. The total amount granted by the RDO for each office will be determined on an office basis, and universities awarded the grant will be allocated 25% of the total funding in the beginning of the award.

All funding requests must be submitted in accordance with the scope of TTOs Model B, and universities must submit an outline of the priorities and uses of such funds. Note that the set amount of funding to be distributed at

the beginning of the grant may be subject to change in the case that the universities fails to comply with the TTO Model B Guidelines.

For successful applications, the RDO will award the funding directly to successful universities. For both models, the universities will provide any TTO related expense invoices (that fall within the scope of funding) to the RDO.

Scope of Funding

Model A:

For the funding of an individual TTO, the successful university can chose to allocate the funding according to the following three categories: salary, facilities, and non-core based expenses, all of which are eligible for TTO funding if they meet the criteria outlined below. Within this model, for universities that have existing TTOs who are aiming to enhance it or for universities aiming to establish a new TTO, funding can be allocated in the following manner:

Salary:

The grant can be used to cover the salaries of the following individuals who are hired by the university TTO over the course of the grant-cycle:

- New Personnel
- Technology Transfer Manager: Managers are required to be capable of engaging with both academics and industry
- Subject Matter Experts: Can be outsourced (e.g. legal and patent counsel)

Facilities Access:

Funding for the independent TTO can be used to get access to facilities that will support in the technology transfer process. Funding for this criteria is as follows:

- Access to university facilities
- Access to university resources (if any)
- Procurement of any related hardware or software

University facilities refers to the physical space required to use or lease to ensure operational efficiency of the TTO or to offer support to stakeholders of the TTO. Examples include laboratory space, related support spaces, computer labs, observation rooms or co-working spaces. This grant can also be used for the procurement of any related hardware or software that is essential for the establishment of the TTO.

Other Expenses:

Other expenses such as travel/mobility, research consumables and training programs may be considered for funding based on proposed TTO requirements.

- Consumables
- Mobility
- Training Development

Model B:

For the funding of a collaborative TTO, the successful universities can choose to allocate the funding according to the following three categories: salary, facilities, and non-core based expenses, all of which are eligible for TTO funding if they meet the criteria outlined below. Funding can be allocated in the following manner:

Salary:

The grant can be used to cover the salaries of the following individuals for the conception of the collaborative TTO over the course of the grant-cycle:

- New Personnel
- Technology Transfer Manager: Managers are required to be capable of engaging with both academics and industry
- Subject Matter Experts: Should hire an in-house staff member responsible for IP policies and procedures which should not be outsourced (e.g. legal and patent counsel)

Facilities Access:

Funding for the establishment of a collaborative TTO can be used to get access to facilities that will support in the technology transfer process. Funding for this criteria is as follows:

- Establishment of the office on the lead university campus
- Access to university facilities
- Procurement of any related hardware or software

University facilities refers to the physical space required to use or lease to ensure operational efficiency of the TTO or to offer support to stakeholders of the TTO. Examples include laboratory space, related support spaces, computer labs, observation rooms or co-working spaces. This grant can also be used for the procurement of any related hardware or software that is essential for the establishment of the TTO.

Other Expenses:

Other expenses such as travel/mobility, research consumables and training programs for new employees may be considered for funding based on proposed TTO requirements.

- Consumables
- Mobility
- Training Development

Approach

Universities are invited to submit only 1 application to either of the Models. If a university submits an application for both Model A and Model B, **only the collaborative proposal will be considered.**

Model A:

The grant consists of a **two-stage application process** where a university is shortlisted based on an assessment of the Expression of Interest form (EOI) (Stage 1), followed by a final submission of a Comprehensive Proposal Application Form by the shortlisted university (Stage 2).

The initial EOI serves to highlight the high-level details of the establishment or enhancement of the proposed TTO, such as expected benefits (social, economic, etc.), and other related areas. The RDO will evaluate these initial

applications to make a decision on which proposals to shortlist. Following this step, the final Comprehensive Proposal should include in-depth TTO details such as vision, mission, financials, and a timeline.

Universities must submit one EOI and will be required to fill in the relative forms. Each university can apply for only **1 TTO grant in a given year.**

Model B:

The grant consists of a **two-stage application process** where collaborating universities are shortlisted based on an assessment of the Expression of Interest form (EOI) (Stage 1), followed by a final submission of a Comprehensive Proposal by the shortlisted universities (Stage 2).

The initial EOI serves to highlight the high-level details of the collaborative TTO, such as expected benefits (social, economic, etc.), and other related areas. The RDO will evaluate these initial applications to make a decision on which collaborative TTOs to shortlist. Following this step, the final Comprehensive Proposal should include in-depth TTO details such as vision, mission, financials, and a timeline.

The collaborating universities are responsible for selecting a lead university that will be accountable for submitting the application on behalf of the partnering universities. To ensure commitment from the partnering university, in Stage 2 of the application process, each university is required to submit a Letter of Support. Each university can apply for only **1 TTO grant in a given year.**

Eligibility

This section outlines the criteria and requirements per application, university, TTO, TTO Manager, and Personnel the university should adhere to increase their chances of being awarded the grant.

Application Eligibility

- Relevant information in regards to the selection of Model A or Model B
- Details of establishing a new TTO or developing their current TTO
- Specific objectives and target outcomes of the proposed TTO
- Management and strategic oversight of the TTO
- TTO financial plan with funds required and any university funding commitment
- Key Performance Indicators used to monitor TTO performance

University Eligibility

- The proposed academic partner or partners must be one of **KSA's 28 public universities (Model B)**
- University or universities must be committed to developing or establishing a TTO
- University or universities must be committed to enhancing their industry partnership through TTOs
- There must be evidence of commitment to the TTO by the university partners through a Letter of Support **(Model B)**
- All TTOs must be fully in accordance with the agreed aims and objectives for the grant

TTO Eligibility

- Should be aligned with and supported by the university or universities it serves
- The TTO's approach and activities should support and add value to the institution(s)

- Must be committed to providing long-term returns, such as sustained partnership and societal well-being
- Must have a defined objective for the TTO
- Committed to supporting both, academics and industry
- Hire staff members with business and technical skills
- Committed to supporting the development of core skills in the team through networking, training and research

TTO Manager Eligibility

In establishing or enhancing a TTO, it is required to hire a TTO Manager that is committed to the objectives of the TTO and the TTO Manager must possess the following:

- The ability to engage with people at all levels in industry and academia
- Business skills, however, an MBA is not required
- Experience in understanding the details of running a business
- An appropriate level of knowledge and experience in research, technology transfer and university-industry collaborations
- Experience in managing individuals

Submission Process and Timeline

Applications for the TTO initiative must be submitted to the RDO electronically via the online form on the website.

Applicants must ensure that the EOI forms are received by the RDO at the latest, **4pm (16:00) on 21st of February 2019 as a single PDF document**. An incomplete application or one that does not meet the eligibility criteria outlined in these Guidelines will not be considered. Shortlisted universities will be informed of their status once the evaluation process is complete.

Based on the TTO initiative Timetable below, applicants must submit the following documentation over the course of the initiative:

Model A:

Pre-allocation of funding:

- 1) Expression of Interest (Stage 1 of application)
- 2) Comprehensive Proposal Application Form (Stage 2 of application, for shortlisted universities only)
- 3) Spend Plan (Stage 2)

Post-Allocation of funding:

- 1) Expenditure Statement (Every 3 months)
- 2) Interim Report (Every 3 months)
- 3) Final Outcome Report

Model B:

Pre-allocation of funding:

- 4) Expression of Interest led by identified university (Stage 1 of application)
- 5) Comprehensive Proposal Application Form (Stage 2 of application, for shortlisted universities only)
- 6) Letter of Support from university partners (Stage 2)
- 7) Spend Plan (Stage 2)

Post-Allocation of funding:

- 4) Expenditure Statement (Every 3 months)
- 5) Interim Report (Every 3 months)
- 6) Final Outcome Report

Documents Required

The summary of documentation and timetable are shown below:

Document	Requirements
<i>Expression of Interest</i>	The EOI is considered the initial application, and it allows the RDO to determine which universities to shortlist. It should provide high-level details of the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of Model A or Model B • Broad outline of objectives of the proposed TTO • Governance of the proposed TTO • Potential contribution to knowledge and practice in alignment with Vision 2030
<i>Comprehensive Proposal</i>	The Comprehensive Proposal is the key element in obtaining the TTO funding. It should outline all information requested in the document. *Please refer to the Comprehensive Proposal Application form for more details.
<i>Spend Plan</i>	The Spend Plan outlines all cost estimates of resources the TTO seeks to use over the grant cycle.
<i>Letter of Support (Model B)</i>	A letter from the university partners addressing support and commitment to the TTO along with reasonable assurance of commitment and other partnership related matters.
<i>Expenditure Statement</i>	An outline of the financial statement of expenditure based on the proposed Spend Plan. *All expenditures listed in the Expenditure Statement must have an associated proof of purchase (e.g. receipt, sub-contract, salary statement, etc.) to be submitted to the RDO along with the actual Expenditure Statement
<i>Interim Report</i>	An update on ongoing outputs, impacts, and outcomes as the grant cycle progresses.

<i>Final Outcome Report</i>	A final statement on outputs, impacts and outcomes at the conclusion of the grant cycle.
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Timetable

Milestone	Deadline
<i>Initiative launch & call for applications open</i>	December 20 th , 2018
<i>Stage 1: EOI Deadline</i>	February 21 st , 2019
<i>Stage 2: Comprehensive Proposal Application Deadline</i>	TBD

Evaluation

The RDO will evaluate all EOIs and shortlist applications. The RDO will then ask all shortlisted applicants to develop Comprehensive Proposal applications. The Comprehensive Proposal application will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Feasibility of the proposed TTO
- Alignment with the objectives of the TTO with that of the university or universities
- Alignment of the proposed TTO objectives with that of the university or universities
- Identification of a TTO Manager that will be responsible of leading the TTO
- Identification of Personnel that will be hired to support the TTO Manager and the overall objectives of the TTO
- Creation of orientation and training for the Personnel
- Completion of the TTO within the stated budget and timeframe
- Potential and plan for expansion of the TTO
- Potential of the partnership to increase new linkages and strengthen collaboration between the universities and industry
- Proof that the TTO will be prioritized and managed thoroughly

Reporting and Monitoring

Funded TTOs must fulfill the financial and non-financial reporting requirements as set by the RDO. The university will hold the responsibility in ensuring all documentation is satisfactory and submitted on time.

After universities receive their funding, if there are any changes in priorities or new circumstances, it is permissible to diverge from the initial Spend Plan submitted to the RDO. However, it is necessary to re-submit a revised Spend Plan and the expenditure must still conform to the scope and intent of the initiative. Compliance will be assessed upon submission of the Expenditure Statement.

Note that a proof of purchase for all items listed in the Expenditure Statement must be submitted along with the Statement itself (e.g. receipt, sub-contract, salary statement, etc.) for the statement to be considered complete.

The university must ensure proper financial management of the funding, and accountability for the use of government funds, while ensuring that formal audit standards and procedures exist for maintaining appropriate anti-fraud and corruption controls – in line with existing university audit and financial control processes within its respective jurisdiction.

It is the responsibility of the university or universities to evaluate whether any legal conditions should be considered in forming a TTO based on local and international requirements. The university or universities must ensure that:

- All relevant stakeholders are compliant from the beginning of the TTO formation to the completion of the grant cycle
- All legal conditions comply with KSA legal standards
- Research is conducted in an ethical manner

Please contact the MoE RDO for more information regarding the TTO initiative.

Enquiries: TTO@moe.gov.sa