



Qatar University

Office of Research Support

**Concept Development
(In conjunction with IRCC International Research
Collaboration Co-Fund)**

Cycle 08 (2025-2026)

(CD- IRCC)

Guidelines

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1. CD-IRCC Program's Summary

Launch of the Call for Proposal	Please check ORS website for more information
Deadline for Proposal Submission	Please check ORS website for more information
Proposals Pre-Screening (ineligibility)	2 weeks after submission deadline
Award Announcement	Please check ORS website for more information
Project Duration	12 months
Budget	Two options: 1- Local Projects: Up to QR120,000 2- International Projects: The funding amount is subjective to the partner's tangible contribution (in cash funding or as PhD scholarship provided to the project). Up to \$80,000 USD joint-funding per project (up to \$40,000 from QU)
Submission	Upload the full applications online through the link provided by the ORS broadcast email
CD-IRCC Program Contact	igrants@qu.edu.qa

2. Program Overview

Sustainable Development includes a priority to develop an environmentally aware population through education. In line with this vision, governments, non-profit regional and international networks have supported the implementation of sustainability and sustainable development goals (SDGs).

This Special Call addresses both local Qatari and International initiatives.

At the National level, the call contributes to the local commitment towards sustainability through the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the National Environment and Climate Change Strategy of Qatar.

At the International level, the objective is to bring together QU and international partners to collaborate on topics of mutual interest related to SDGs in a multilateral scheme. The CD-IRCC can be considered as an instrument to pool resources at a multilateral level to support collaborative research and innovation projects in this field. QU is committed to work with its partners to contribute to the current research investigations that ensures good health and wellbeing for all population.

Among the priorities of this call, a special attention was shed towards environmental sustainability and climate change, health and safety of the society.

3. Research Area:

- Clean water and sanitation
- Climate change
- Renewable energy
- Sustainable cities
- Pandemics
- Food security
- Infrastructure for SDGs
- Raising awareness for SDGs
- Impact of COVID for SDGs
- Education
- Industry Innovation
- Institutional teams related to SDGs (units)

4. Program Objectives

The CD-IRCC will pave the way for sustainable cooperation between research and innovation institutions in the area of SDGs in Qatar and around the globe based on the following activities:

- Directly contributing to the SDGs
- Establishing and enhancing research collaboration networks between Qatar University and partner institutions (local organizations, international partners)
- Implementing impactful research and innovation activities
- Building human capital nationally and internationally

- Optimally utilizing resources, infrastructure and expertise to the joint advantage of the region and the globe
- Building trust, learning from each other's experiences, and helping scientific advancement in a concerted manner to fulfill the knowledge based economy aspirations.
- Providing a research platform for students and researchers and creating exchange opportunities

5. Research Team Structure

The research team will have a Lead Principle Investigator (LPI) from Qatar University and a LPI from the partner institution(s) (option 2, see the Program's Summary). Qatar University research team should have at least two faculty members including the Lead PI (Assistant Professor; Research Associate; Associate Professor; Professor) and at least one junior researcher (Research Assistant, PhD Student or Graduate Assistant). Research centers, colleges, and central lab units should provide all support needed to research teams.

Research teams in the partner institution(s) (Option 2) should follow their own requirements. The involvement of graduate and undergraduate students is an advantage and proposals including these will be seen in a favorable light.

6. Eligibility

The following criteria also apply:

- 1- If option 2, the proposal must include an international tangible co-funding (in cash funding or as PhD scholarship provided to the project, the PhD candidate should be fully dedicated to the project, priority is given to PhD student co-supervised by QU and partner's LPIs, ongoing PhD are considered as in-kind)
- 2- If Option 2, a letter of commitment should be submitted by the partner(s) institution(s) signed by an appropriate institutional signatory
- 3- The proposal is aligned with SDG's area QU Research Pillars.
- 4- The LPI is a full-time QU faculty member (Assistant Professor, Research Associate, Associate Professor, Professor)
- 5- QU project team includes at least 2 faculty members (Lead PI and PI) for Option 1
- 6- The research team will have a Lead Principal Investigator (LPI) from Qatar University and a LPI from the partner institution(s). Collaboration with QU PI (optional) should be justified if option 2
- 7- Project team includes at least one junior researcher from QU (Graduate Students, Research Assistant, etc.).
- 8- Project budget does not include equipment costs for Qatar University as this is provided by the Research Centers, Colleges and Central labs.

- 9- A College/Centre commitment letter supporting the proposal should be submitted and signed by Associate Dean for Research/ Center's Director
- 10- The proposed project does not request above the maximum authorized budget per project from CD-IRCC funds
- 11- The proposal is new, and was not previously fully or partially funded by any other source
- 12- The required documents (Application, Budget sheet, CVs, Similarity Report) should be provided at the time of submission.
- 13- The Research plan and expected outcomes section in the Application Template should not exceed the number of allowed pages.

7. Budget

CD-IRCC will have one submission cycle per year, with a maximum allocated funding per project of QR120, 000 for option 1 (Local Project) and US \$80,000 joint funding for option 2 with cash funding or with at least a minimum of a PhD student scholarship directly provided within the proposal (on going PhD works will be considered as in-kind contribution).

The funding for the second year will be subjected to satisfactory performance of the first year, assessed through submission of an annual report and a peer-review process. The funding for the second year is also subject to the validation of the progress report, assessed through submission of an annual report and a peer-review process, and confirmation of **the full time enrolment of a dedicated PhD candidate** in the project at the partner's institution.

Advantage will be given to proposals that include a higher percentage of In-Cash funding.

QU team ensures all CD-IRCC QU funded budget categories comply with the QU Internal Grants Policy (<http://www.qu.edu.qa/research/offices/research-support/policies>). For the QU allocation of funds all equipment costs must be funded by the related College / Centre as demonstrated in the budget justification section of the application.

Each Co-funder shall be directly responsible for dispersing and managing their share of funds allocated for the granted proposal as per the signed agreement. All supplies, equipment and consumables purchase related to research tasks and aims conducted at one of the collaborating institutes must be dispersed and covered from the contributing institution's share of co-funding. The co-funder could match with cash or with PhD student.

8. Commitment Letter

At QU: Each co-funder/ collaborative institution will need to provide a Commitment Letter to support the application. We require the letter to be on headed paper signed by the legal representative institution (President, Vice President...) and included in the final submission through iGrant. (Commitment letters signed by a member of the proposed project team will not be accepted.)

ORS will also provide Commitment Letters to its LPIs if requested by the partners.

9. Proposal Evaluation from QU side

Upon submission of a proposal through the iGrants system, ORS will endeavor to proceed with all checks, screenings and reviews. Each proposal will be screened for the CD-IRCC Eligibility Criteria. Any proposal not meeting the Above Eligibility Criteria will be pre-screened and not sent out for technical review. The proposals Pre-Award lifecycle is provided hereunder:



Any proposals that have met the Eligibility Criteria will then be sent out for Technical review. Proposals will go through a technical review by external peer reviewers using the published evaluation criteria.

Peer Review (Technical)

The reviewers will evaluate the proposals make recommendations to the QU Committee Evaluation and the Joint Reviewing Committee (JRC) as to “approve funding” or “reject funding,” and provide narrative feedback to applicants. The evaluation criteria consist of the following:

1. Intellectual Merit (Excellent; Very Good; Good; Fair; Poor) (40%)
2. Expected Impact (Excellent; Very Good; Good; Fair; Poor) (25%)
3. Work Plan (Excellent; Very Good; Good; Fair; Poor) (20%)
4. Qualifications and complementarity of the Research Team (Excellent; Very Good; Good; Fair; Poor) (15%)

JRC Committees Validation

After the technical feedback, JRC committees will finalize their ranking mainly based on the technical peer review, while considering other non-technical criteria such as the LPI outcome during the last 2 years, the LPI availability and capacity to manage the proposal and the Partner’s Contribution (Cash/In-kind).

Global Evaluation

Grade	Categorization	Contextual Guidance
Excellent	A	The proposal is beyond expectations and ALL technical/non-technical criteria have been met.
Very Good	B	The proposal meets expectations in general and have some minor limitations. The selection of awarded projects depend also on the global budget limitation.
Fair	C	The proposal does not meet expectations

10. Rebuttal

Only projects from previous cycles with grade B are allowed to resubmit once for the current or future cycles of the internal grants. Resubmitted proposals are required to provide a rebuttal to comments made by the reviewers in the application template.

Any project graded two times B will be automatically considered as grade C.

All ranked C proposals need further enhancement to be resubmitted. They cannot be considered for this Cycle call, but are welcome for re-submission, with the rebuttal clarifying the updates and enhancements, for Cycle 9 or beyond.

11. Appeals

The competition for research awards is intense and many high quality applications may not receive support. All applications receive careful scrutiny by the peer reviewers, in the context of competing claims on available funding. Appeals may therefore not be made against the academic judgment of the peer reviewers or ORS committees. The sole ground on which an appeal may be made is one of improper procedure. Anyone wishing to make an appeal against a decision should should fill the related e-form no later than 2 weeks after the award announcement, citing the specific decision and setting out clearly the substantive basis of the appeal. Only LPIs themselves may appeal. The Director will communicate to the LPI the decision of the committee within 30 days.

12. Acknowledgement of Support

CD-IRCC LPIs shall ensure that all research publications resulting from this grant includes the following statement:

“This [publication, poster, report, etc.] was jointly supported by Qatar University and XXX CD-IRCC [GRANT CODE]. The findings achieved herein are solely the responsibility of the authors.”

13. Inquiries

For any inquiry regarding this document and the proposal submission process please send an email to igrants@qu.edu.qa