

KOÇ UNIVERSITY SEED RESEARCH FUND PROGRAM 2021

Initiated for the first time in 2014, the “Koç University Seed Research Fund (KU-SRF) Program” is designed to support innovative early-stage research projects from all disciplines represented in our university (science, medicine, engineering, administrative sciences, economics, social sciences and humanities, law and nursing). KU-SRF Program principally aims to support creativity, free/out-of-the-box thinking, and curiosity-driven research, to facilitate scientific development and innovation. The program is mandated by the “Koç University Directive for Scientific Research Projects” and is administered by the Research, Project Development and Technology Transfer Directorate ([RPDTTD](#)).

The primary objectives of the program are to incentivize free-minded and conceptually unconstrained scientific projects, to enhance global scientific knowledge and to promote scientific development in Turkey. The transfer of knowledge and technology to industry - for relevant fields of the research proposals - is a secondary objective of the program.

This program is **not designed** to provide additional resources for projects already underway. Do not consider an application to fund your needs for an ongoing research project. Present a structured topic you have not exclusively explored before and treat the KU-SRF grant as an initial resource that will help you embark upon that new research path. Ideally, it is expected that you expand your project (seeking, if necessary, larger research and innovation funding from external donors) at the end of your project duration. KU-SRF is supposed to help you plant the seed of an innovative idea.

The seed fund program is open to **all full-time KU faculty and post-doctoral researchers**. After the selection process, each successful application is awarded up to 25.000, - TL per year for up to two years.

Timeline:

- Program Announcement: 22 February 2021
- Deadline for applications: 22 April 2021 (17:00)
- Panel evaluation & notification of decisions: May 2021
- Expected earliest commencement of funding: July 2021

How to Apply:

- Documents to be submitted: “Project Proposal Form”, “Budget Table”, CV. **“KU Ethics Committee Approval Letter” will be required only for approved proposals.** [Please consult KU’s Ethics Review Boards [webpage](#).]
- **Proposals are written in English.**
- Application packages will be e-submitted (in PDF format) to Emrah Göker (egoker@ku.edu.tr) and Oya Gül (ogul@ku.edu.tr) from Research, Project Development and Technology Transfer Directorate (RPDTTD).
- Late submissions will not be accepted.

Previous KU-SRF Actions:

- If you have an active KU-SRF project, you **cannot apply**. If you are a previous KU-SRF grantee and have completed your project, you are eligible.

Financial Rules and Reminders:

If approved, your grant will be treated as a regular “project” and be tracked through the SAP system. **The grant will not be transferred to your personal account.**

We recommend that you request RPDTTD’s feedback about your budget before submission. You can contact Mukadder Ezel Yılmaz at muyilmaz@ku.edu.tr.

1. Project budget will support only equipment, supplies, travel and services. We do not ask for invoices/proformas, but make sure your cost estimates are realistic.
2. Please complete the provided excel budget table for your cost breakdown.
3. Justification of each budget item is required. Please include as much detail as possible in the Excel table, justifying your costs in terms of your scientific objectives.
4. Please list each individual item for your “consumables” budget, do not write a lump sum.
5. Travel expenses for field trips required for the implementation of research project **are eligible**.
6. Travel expenses for attending national/international conferences, workshops, etc. **are not eligible**.
7. Publication costs **are not eligible**.

8. Graduate student support costs (fellowship, housing food, social insurance, etc.) **are not eligible**. Support for graduate students will continue to be provided through the existing scholarship system.
9. During the implementation of your funded action, all purchases will be processed through the Procurement Directory in accordance with Koc University Tender Regulation.
10. Please calculate the cost of equipment and supplies including respective taxation costs (e.g., customs duty if purchased from abroad).
11. All equipment must be registered within KU's inventory records.
12. As you proceed with your research, you may require transfers between your budget items. Please present your justification to RPDTTD for approval.
13. Unused budget will automatically be transferred to the next period of the project.
14. You are **not allowed** to use unspent budget after the termination date of your project.

KU-SRF and Your Other Proposal Submissions:

If you are going to submit a KU-SRF 2020 proposal which is derived, part of, related, etc. to an external grant proposal you have already submitted elsewhere, please mention this in your text and during your presentation. If your other application already covers the basics of your KU-SRF application, evaluators may still decide to fund you. In such a case, we wait for the outcome of your other proposal. If your other proposal is approved, you do not get KU-SRF funding.

Evaluation Process:

1) Eligibility Check

RPDTTD checks for the administrative eligibility of proposals within five days following the submission deadline.

- Submissions received after the announced deadline will be rejected.
- Incomplete submissions will be rejected.
- Proposals should conform to the format outlined in the provided main proposal and budget forms.

2) Panel Review

Eligible proposals are evaluated by the "Commission for Scientific Research Projects". The Commission consists of: KU President, two Vice Presidents, Graduate School Directors and the Deans. RPDTTD officers are going to be present in the evaluation discussions for recording/reporting purposes.

The Evaluation Panel will be organized as a webinar via Zoom.

- Presentations can be structured any way you wish but should not exceed 5 minutes. You do not need to send any digital files to RPDTTD. You can use any media that can be sharable via Zoom, or just talk about your proposal. Each presentation is followed by a 5-minute Q&A session during which the applicant responds to the queries of the Panel members.
- If your presentation has slides, the limit is 5: A title slide (can include basic information about you), 3 slides on your research + 1 slide (if applicable) describing the current research infrastructure (lab, etc) that you are running/using. You will thus have a presentation window of 1 minute per slide on average.
- If you are otherwise engaged on the dates of the Evaluation Panel, you can (but do not have to) send slides, or even a video or audio recording of the presentation (of course, keep the recording within the 5-minute range) to RPDTTD to be told on your behalf.
- After the completion of the reviews of all eligible proposals, the panel assesses and ranks the proposals based on the evaluation criteria. Depending on the total operating budget available and the number of above-threshold proposals, the Commission will decide which proposals are elected for funding.

The Commission discusses the proposals according to two basic sets of criteria, “Scientific & Research Quality” and “Researcher”. In order to aid the final decision of the Commission, each member scores various aspects of these two main criteria. Later, short letters informing only the approval or rejection of the applications are sent to each applicant. **Letters to researchers do not mention scores, just the approval/rejection decision.**

RPDTTD prepares the contracts for awarded projects, which are co-signed by the grantee and the VPRD before the expected project start date. Grantees are allowed to postpone their project start date up to 3 months after the first day of the month following the signature of the contract. If you need to postpone your start date beyond 3 months, you need to provide a justification for the VPRD approval.

Implementation:

Mukadder Ezel Yılmaz (muyilmaz@ku.edu.tr) from RPDTTD will be supporting researchers during the implementation of approved KU-SRF projects.

Within 30 days following the end date of the KU-SRF action, the grantee is required to submit a written Final Report to RPDTTD (template provided during the announcement of the call). Your report will be evaluated by a faculty assigned by the Commission. Depending on the evaluation of your report, the Commission might request additional data or revisions to the report. Following the successful conclusion of a project, grantees might be asked to present their findings as part of a “Seed Research Fund Seminar Series”.