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MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON UNIVERSITY

GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH GRANTS ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

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APPROVAL

Approved by the Mountains of the Moon University Council

Signature _____

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CHAIRPERSON, UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

Date 27.03.2025

PHILOSOPHY, VISION, MISSION AND CORE VALUES

Philosophy

Transforming minds to enhance community engagement

Vision

To be a center of excellence in teaching, research and community engagement for sustainable development

Mission

To provide Innovative and transformative education, Research and Community engagement for socio-economic transformation

Core Values

Professionalism, Innovativeness, Integrity, Teamwork, and Social Responsibility

1. RATIONALE

The need to put in place a robust grants administration and management system to enhance the implementation of research in the university in order to achieve the theory of change, that aligns with the stakeholder's expectations is of strategic intervention. The development of these guidelines is anchored on existing policies, and their adoption is crucial for realization of efficient operations and elevation of the research and innovation pillar. This document provides guidance to faculty grant administrators, principal Investigators, teams, grants management unit and University Management by ensuring that standard operating procedures are adhered to.

2. INTRODUCTION

Mountains of the Moon University is in the early stages of concretizing the operationalization of the Graduate Studies Policy (2024), Research and Publication Policy (2024), the Research Agenda (2023-2028), among others. It is envisaged that these guidelines will reinforce the provisions in the governing policies, Acts and Laws, and bring about clarity in the value chain of grants management. The guidelines will apply to both external and internally funded projects unless otherwise exempted.

3. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS STATEMENT

Various units, individual scholars and the university management have been successful in soliciting and obtaining grants leading to a substantial grants' portfolio within MMU, which offer great opportunity for research and training. The development of these guidelines is therefore geared towards streamlining and leveraging on these efforts as well provide a supportive ecosystem for grants mobilization and management. The interpretation and implementation of these guidelines will be synergistic with other existing operational guidelines in the University.

4. SCOPE

The guidelines encompass the stages involved from the point of expression of interest in grant application, solicitation/award of grants, administration of actions prior to implementation, implementation, role played by various hierarchical stakeholders, reporting, monitoring and evaluation and final project closure.

5. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

The management of grants at the University shall not contradict policies and the relevant legal provisions governing the operations of the University as well as the financial manual of the University, the statutory instruments issued by Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, and the Public Finance Management Act 2015 (As amended).

The following Standard Operating Procedures (SOPS) shall be adhered to:

a) The University shall declare the grants to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the grants shall be included in the budgets of the faculty/Units that initiated the grant and overall University budget in accordance with existing laws, regulations, and policies.

b) Each grant shall have an operation, monitoring, and closure plan to fit within the overall University plan.

c) The staff who has a grant or project in the process of approval shall declare it to the University so that it is included in the budget estimates of the University.

d) Proceeds from a grant innovation by a member of staff shall be shared between the University and the innovator in the ratio of 40%: 60%.

e) Royalty sharing after commercialization of grant innovation shall be in the ratio of 20% and 80% for the University and the innovator (after the innovator ceases being member of staff of the University), otherwise the ratio in d) stands.

6. SETTING UP OF THE GRANTS STEERING AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION COMMITTEE (GSRMC)

The GSRMC shall have the following responsibilities:

i. Consider and approve work plans for Grants Management Unit
ii. Consider and approve reports of the Grants management Unit before they are submitted to the University Management.
iii. Provide leadership and advice on mechanisms to improve monitoring, bench-marking and reporting performance of grants.
iv. Support the University to build linkages with Government, the private sector/industry, civil society, and other research institutions to strengthen the grants portfolio.

The GSRMC shall be comprised of the following (In consonance with sec 5. 2 of the Research and Publication Policy (2024):

i. Deputy Vice Chancellor - Academic Affairs
ii. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (F&A) who shall be the Chairperson
iii. The University Secretary
iv. The Director Graduate Studies, Research and Innovation
v. The Director Planning and Investment
vi. Two (2) representatives of Deans of Faculties
vii. One (1) member from the Finance Department

The Head of the Grants Management Unit shall be Secretary to the Committee. For avoidance of doubt, the Grants Management Unit (GMU) shall fall under the Directorate of Graduate Research and

Innovations. The Deputy Director (Grants) will head the unit whose role will be stipulated in the subsequent section.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DUTY BEARERS IN GRANTS MANAGEMENT PROCESS

7.1 MMU University Council:

The University Council shall be responsible for appropriation of all grants and donations received by the University and for the formulation of governing
policies.

7.2 Vice-Chancellor:

The Vice Chancellor shall be responsible for:

a) Signing all grant agreements, contracts, and MoUs with external funder(s) on the advice of the DGSRI in consultation with the Directorate of Legal Affairs;

b) Appointing of the Grants Management Steering Committee.

7.3 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs)

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) shall:

a) Chair all the academic grants at the university.

b) Be responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the overall coordination of all academic grants and donations in the University

7.4 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Finance and Administration)

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (F&A) shall:

a) Chair the Grants Steering and Resource Mobilization committee (GSRMC)
b) Be responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the overall coordination of all grants and donations in the University.

7.5 University Secretary

The University Secretary shall:

a) be a member of the University Grants Steering and Resource Mobilization Committee.
b) Be the Accounting Officer for all grants and donations.

7.6 University Bursar

The University Bursar shall be responsible for:

a) The establishment of project specific accounts/ledgers

b) Processing of payments in accordance with the principles governing the grant
c) Ensuring timely accountability of disbursed funds
d) Submission of financial reports and
e) Supporting financial audits of projects funded by grants

7.7 Director Graduate Studies, Research and Innovations (DGSRI)

The Director - DGSRI shall be responsible for:

a) Overall coordination of research grants and total quality value chain management
b) Initiating the development and review of guidelines and policies for research and innovation execution
c) Signing all agreements with PIs of internally awarded grants.
d) Clearing requisitions for internally and externally awarded research grants prior to action by University Bursar and Accounting Officer.
e) Preparing annual reports on all grants in the University
f) Superintending the grants management committee, and
g) Undertaking monitoring, evaluation, and quality assurance in the execution of grants at the University.

7.8 Faculty Management level

The faculty management will work in conjunction with Directorate of Graduate Studies, Research, and Innovation to achieve the following tasks:

a) Build research capacity and grant writing capacity to solicit resources to enable development of innovations through the participation of relevant committees, research teams and graduate students.
b) Create Grant application committee and select individuals within the faculty to participate.
c) Effectively respond and reply to Request for Applications regarding grants that pertain to their specialization or discipline
d) Support the staff to develop quality proposals that shall be able to attract the desired funding.
e) Develop profiles of potential Principal Investigators that can be utilized in future grant applications.
f) Allocate financial resources and time towards grants applications.
g) Ensure proper accountability and timely reports pertaining to the grants.

7.9 Principal Investigators (PI)

The PI is responsible for:

a) Ensuring successful initiation, negotiation, execution/implementation, and closeout of the project.
b) Reviewing of the contract/notice of award in its entirety and paying close attention to all elements of the agreement
c) Initiating project activities, payment schedules, and work plans.
d) Ensuring that new and existing staff are aware of grant conditions.
e) Being the main point of contact with donor representatives for the specific grant.
f) Supervising and management of the project implementation team.
g) Ensuring timely and accurate reporting.

7.10 Directorate of Legal Affairs

The Directorate/unit of Legal Affairs shall review contracts/notice of award documents for compliance with University policies and regulations before signature by authorised officials.

7.11 Directorate of Internal Audit

The Director Internal Audit will have overall responsibility for audit of Grants. Where the funder, requires an independent external Audit, the Head internal audit shall advise the PI on the appropriate steps.

7.12 The Grants Management Unit (GMU)

The Grants Management Unit of the DGSRI shall:

a) Undertake regular mapping and maintain an up-to-date database of grants and funding opportunities and ensure that these opportunities are communicated to faculty and staff in a timely manner
b) Support faculty and other staff of the University in the preparation of grants applications including the following;

   i. Eligibility checks for grant opportunities.
   ii. Proofing adherence to application guidelines.
   iii. Appropriate formatting of proposals.
   iv. Compliance with University regulations.
   v. Clearance from relevant University departments and officials.
   vi. Securing necessary support documents.
   vii. Advising on budget requirements and supporting the budget processes including ensuring that applicable administrative fees as well as staff and auditing costs are provided for.

c) Support award winners in the grant negotiations and coordinate with relevant University authorities for the signing processes
d) Liaise with relevant University authorities for project account set-up wherever necessary;
e) Follow-up with Principal Investigators to ensure timely compliance with grant contract conditions and University policies
f) Ensure that concluded projects are appropriately closed out in accordance with university policies, guidelines and the funders terms of the grant.
g) Maintain a database of all grants in the university
h) Be the Secretariat to the Grants Steering and Resource Mobilisation Committee;
i) Prepare quarterly reports in accordance with the provisions

8. OVERHEADS/PROJECT ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

The terms indirect costs, overhead costs, and administrative costs are synonymous. These costs relate to the use of an institution's facilities and administrative support but cannot be claimed as direct costs. Overhead costs are critical to implementation of institutional activities and are important for the success of institutional projects as well as for the institution hosting the project as they are incurred for common objectives within the institution.

While some funders/donors prescribe the percentage of the overhead to be charged on a grant, others allow for institutions to use their own rates, yet others simply do not allow over-head on a grant. For MMU to remain afloat in supporting grants, the charge on overheads/administrative rate is 10% of the grant amount as provided for in the Research and Publication Policy. Where the above percentage is not applicable and require a waiver or variation, University Council decision shall be sought through the Vice-Chancellor.

8.1 Project Overheads Distribution

Where overheads are allowable on a grant, the total collectable overheads shall be equated to 100% and follow the following distribution:

a) Central Administration 40%
b) Directorate of Graduate Studies, Research and Innovations 20%
c) Grants management Unit 10%
d) Relevant Faculty (s) 10%
e) Relevant Department(s) 10%
f) Principal Investigator 10% (Strictly for Research Support outside the budgeted items)

8.2 Funds Disbursement

The PI will channel his/her request through the Director GSRI then thru the Bursar to the Accounting Officer for approval. Where cheques apply, the Bursar and Accounting Officer shall be signatory to the cheques.

9. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

In the event a person or stakeholder is aggrieved during implementation of a grant, he/she will write to the Vice Chancellor with substantial evidence for redress after exploring all other options within the hierarchy of the project administration and Management.

10. Review of the Guidelines

The Senate Committee of Graduate Studies, Research Ethics and Publications shall monitor and evaluate the implementation of the guidelines with a view of forming a basis for review.