



**Science & Technology
Development Fund**



**Ministry of State for
Scientific Research**

Capacity Building Grant (CBG)

Call for Proposals (TC/13/ CBG /2012)

Deadline of Application 20/05/2012

2012

Call for Proposals

STDF Targeted Calls

"TC/13/ CBG /2012"

1. Call name: Capacity Building Grant (CBG)

2. Call reference no.: TC/13/ CBG /2012

3. Preamble:

The Science and Technology Development Fund (STDF) was established by Presidential decree number 218/2007. Its mandate is to promote science and technology (S&T) through funding scientific research and technological development in a way that supports the complete cycle of innovation.

STDF's specific objectives are to improve Egypt's research and development environment, fund science and technology (S&T) activities and develop the innovation capacity of Egypt.

STDF implements its objectives within the context of the national S&T development strategy, which is established by the Higher Council for Science & Technology. The Egyptian ministries with the strongest impact on Egypt's national economy are represented in the council to direct the research activities towards the scientific and technological activities which have a direct influence on the national development plans.

4. Call description:

The Egyptian research and development environment suffered for a long time from scarcity of funding. The establishment of STDF helped overcome this deficiency, and the research community gained access to several research grants which are provided on a competitive basis. The scope of the current grant is the improvement of the research-supporting environment by improving the research infrastructure. The capacity building grant serves to provide and repair scientific research equipment in Egyptian institutions of higher education and research centers. The application to this grant with the intention of upgrading the research

facilities to qualify to ISO 17025 is encouraged. The capacity building grant is further classified into two funding categories; Category A: Equipment Acquisition (IA) and Category B: Equipment Repair (IR).

The instrument acquisition category aims to facilitate the acquisition of research instrumentation that, in general, is too costly and/or not appropriate for support through other STDF research grant schemes. Applicants may seek support for acquisition of a single instrument, a large system of instruments, or multiple instruments that share a common or specific research focus. The instrument repair category aims to assist in the repair of equipment acquired by universities and research institutions nationwide. Proposals must address the repair of existing equipment provided that they are repaired by their original manufactures. Instruments are expected to be operational for regular research and development use by the end of the award period.

This grant is directed towards institutions not individual researchers and applications shall be submitted by the research institution. The grant is provided within the framework of the strategic plan of the applicant institution. The applicant must demonstrate the relevance of the proposal to its research group's strategic plan. Each university or research center will be funded a maximum of two proposals irrespective of their number of faculties or research institutes.

With this vision, STDF hereby calls upon different research institutions to apply for this grant. Projects with implementation periods of up to one year may be accepted for funding, depending on the proposed activities. The maximum budget for Instrument Acquisition category is five million Egyptian pounds per project but in exceptional cases, with strong justification, higher budget may be awarded. The maximum number of projects to be awarded to one research institution (university or research center) is two projects. The instrument repair category provides a grant of up to 20% of the original price of the instrument to be repaired. Applicants may seek support for instrument repair of a single instrument, a large system of instruments, or multiple instruments that share a common or specific research focus.

Institutions funded by STDF under the IA category should grant access for other researchers affiliated to any national institution to those equipment purchased by STDF funds.

Funding of selected proposals under this call is subject to availability of funds.

5. Call objectives:

The projects proposals should be directed towards **achieving the following objectives (or some of them):**

- Supporting the acquisition and repair of major state-of-the-art instrumentation, thereby improving access to, and increased use of, modern research instrumentation by scientists;
- Supporting the acquisition and repair of instrumentation that contributes to, or takes advantage of, existing investments, while avoiding duplication of services already provisioned by previous investments.
- Promoting substantive and meaningful partnerships between academia and the private sector. Such partnerships have the potential to build capacity and develop industry sectors with the help of academia in leading research and development efforts.

For Instrument Acquisition Category:

- Enabling academic departments, disciplinary and cross disciplinary units, and collaborations to create well equipped research environments;
- Acquisition of optional and auxiliary parts related to acquired equipment which can enhance the capabilities of existing facilities;

For Instrument Repair Category:.

- Supporting the repair of existing equipment in order to enhance research infrastructure;
- Replacement of rapidly consumed parts of equipment due to proper use resulting from wear and tear;

6. Eligible research areas:

The grant covers projects in the research areas identified by the Higher Council for Science and Technology and the Supreme Council for Research Institutes as strategic areas for scientific research, which are:

- New and renewable energy

- Water resources and desalination
- Life sciences (basic sciences, environmental sciences, medical and pharmaceutical sciences)
- Food and agriculture
- Space technology and its applications
- Information and communication technology
- Social sciences and humanities
- Industrial development
- Urban planning and housing
- Advanced and new technologies (e.g. Biotechnology and Nanotechnology) related to any of the above mentioned areas

7. Eligibility criteria:

The following eligibility criteria apply for this grant:

- Egyptian research institutions (Universities, research centers and institutes) are eligible for this program.
- The coordinator of the project representing the institution must have a Ph.D. degree.
- The proposed project must be within the main areas mentioned above (item 6).
- The proposed project must be a part of a well-planned research plan, which addresses an important subject, and which has clearly defined objectives and desired outcomes, as well as a detailed methodology.
- The proposed project is not funded by any other STDF funding grant or any other funding agency.
- The projects budget must meet the limits of the grant.
- The implementation period of the project must not exceed twelve months.
- Equipment should be repaired by their original manufacturer or one of their agents.
- An endorsement letter from the research institution stating that the activity is part of the institution's strategic plan must be included in the proposal.

8. Eligible expenses:

Grant applications must include a detailed estimated budget in which all expenditures are given in Egyptian Pounds (see Application Form).

Budgets should be carefully developed and should not be overestimated. STDF reserves the right to reject a proposal which is considered as overestimated by STDF's reviewers.

The eligible expenditures of the grant must be directly linked to performing the capacity building upgrading activities. No indirect costs are covered by this grant. Accordingly, the project's budget can only be directed towards the following items:

- Cost of equipment, instruments and optional and auxiliary parts
- Cost of shipping and handling
- Applicable taxes and customs
- Cost of technical support and training
- Cost of necessary facilities upgrade for new equipment (wiring, ventilation, etc.)
- Cost of repair of existing equipment.
- Cost of replacement of rapidly consumed parts of equipment.

The following items are not allowed:

- Salaries.
- Indirect cost.

9. General terms and conditions:

The following terms and conditions apply to the grant:

- All projects shall be evaluated on a competitive basis.
- The application must include a letter from the applicant institution's director stating the proposal title, the name of the Principal Investigator (PI) in charge of this proposal, that the project was not funded or submitted to another agency (national or international), that the required equipment is either unavailable or inaccessible to the institution's researchers and that the institution approves the project. This letter must be signed and stamped by the institution.
- All applications must be filled using the exact format requirements for the current call. Failure to adhere to the exact format required in the grant program will automatically disqualify the submitted proposal.
- All proposals must be uploaded to the STDF website; proposals submitted by e-mail or sent as hard copies will not be considered.

- All proposals MUST be in English; Arabic is allowed only for proposals in the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences.
- Equipment purchased using STDF funds MUST be made available to all researchers in Egyptian institutions.
- A separate bank account for the project should be opened and managed by the institution.
- All proposals must include, in addition to the scope, the exact outputs, benefits and costs of the proposed work.
- The cost structure should be suitable for the proposed scope.

10. Proposal Submission process:

All project proposals must be uploaded to STDF's website (www.stdf.org.eg), to which registration is required. The applicant is asked to upload the full proposal (as detailed in the relevant Application Form).

11. Proposal evaluation process:

The project proposals will be evaluated by independent experts, and STDF will ensure that the process is transparent, impartial and researcher-supportive. Also, after full proposal submission, STDF officers may make field visits to assess the applicant's need for funding the proposed project. Also, the applicant may be asked to make a presentation of the proposal.

The evaluation shall consider among others the following items:

- Availability of suitable space and facilities for requested equipment
- Availability of similar equipment in other research institutions
- Existing facilities, equipment and experts in the institution
- Justification for purchasing requested equipment and the budget
- Relevance of the project to the national priority areas identified by HCST
- Relevance of the project to the institutional clear long term research plan
- Expected impact of possessing the requested equipment on the scientific community
- Ease of access to the requested equipment by other stakeholders.
- The accreditation of some experiments using the requested equipment based on ISO17025

- Status of the equipment to be repaired and required repair

12. Negotiation and contract signing:

Negotiation and signing of the project's funding agreement will take place shortly after the announcement of the evaluation results. The intellectual property rights (IPR) issues will be a core part of the process and will be guided by the STDF IPR rules.

Since the processing and evaluation of the submitted proposals entail significant expenditure of financial and human resources, it is highly discouraged for the PI to decline from continuation of the project after full proposal submission. Requests asking for project discontinuation by the PI after proposal submission, following contract signing, or during the project life-time will be thoroughly investigated by STDF. STDF has the right to financial compensation and/or to impose a ban period on the PI from participating in STDF-related activities.

Moreover, the PI should clearly state in the proposal which of the following options does he/she prefer in the unlikely event of his/her inability to complete the project:

- a- Discontinuation of the project, however, the PI should be aware that, if he/she chooses this option, all funds and expenses paid by STDF must be refunded to STDF upon termination of the project.
- b- Transferring all the PI responsibilities and rights (including IPR) to the Co-PI.

13. Intellectual property rights (IPR):

It is expected that the applicant and the implementing institution will conform to the STDF-IPR regulations, detailed as a separate document on the STDF website (www.stdf.org.eg). Submission of a proposal to STDF automatically implies that the applicant and his institution accept all conditions of STDF-IPR policy, which will consequently be an integral part of the proposal contract. Within this context, it is mandatory that the PI obtains STDF's approval before disclosure, in any form (i.e. publication, scientific presentation in a meeting, public announcement, ..etc.) of data, findings or conclusions reached as a result of conducting the project activities. This ensures the protection of the PI's IPR, as well as those of STDF.

STDF should be acknowledged in any publication/conference presentation/public announcement, produced as a result of an STDF funded project.

14. Follow up:

14.1 Financial reports

According to the financial regulations of the government of Egypt, a financial report for the project must be submitted every three months. Copies of all expenditure vouchers must be attached. The reports, as well as all the attached expenditure vouchers, must be signed and stamped by the official seal of the institution.

14.2 Technical reports

Three technical reports should be submitted by the PI during the period of the project. In general, all technical progress reports should be written using the standard STDF templates for progress reports. All reports should have a cover page which contains the basic information about the report (viz., the project title, the type of grant, the PI's name and affiliation, the project start and end dates, the project duration, the reporting period, the date of submitting the report, and the PI's signature). In addition to the cover page, each of the three progress reports must include a number of main sections which contain all the necessary information, as detailed hereafter.

14.2.1 First progress report

The first progress report is to be submitted after three months of the official start of the project. The first report must include the following main sections: (1) Objective(s) of the reporting period, (2) Activities conducted since the project start date, (3) Problems encountered and resolutions, (4) Implementing team, and (5) Brief monetary report.

In cases where modifications in the original work plan are necessary, such modifications must be pre-approved by STDF, and the progress report should include a modified (updated) Gantt chart that takes the approved modifications into consideration.

14.2.2 Second (interim) progress report

After nine months from the project's start date, an interim progress report must be submitted, which includes the following main sections: (1) Objective(s) of the reporting period, (2) Former achievements through this contract, (3) Technical/scientific accomplishments/activities, (4) The

PI evaluation of the progress of the project, (5) Actual or expected problems encountered and resolutions, (6) Implementing team(s), and (7) Brief monetary report.

In cases where modifications in the original work plan are necessary, such modifications must be pre-approved by STDF, and the progress report should include a modified (updated) Gantt chart that takes the approved modifications into consideration.

14.2.3 Final report

Within one month following the official end date of the project, the final report must be submitted. It must include the following main sections: (1) Summary (in English and in Arabic), (2) Abstracts (in Arabic and in English), (3) Objectives, (4) Technical/scientific accomplishments/activities, (5) The Gantt chart for the project period, (6) The Logical Framework Matrix (LFM), (7) The PI evaluation of the progress of the project, (8) Actual problems encountered during the project execution and resolutions, (9) Implementing team(s), (10) Brief monetary report and (11) Efficiency and performance of the purchased or repaired equipment

14.3 Evaluation of technical reports

All submitted reports are evaluated by STDF, and a feedback is sent to the project's PI. If the project is unexplainably not performing according to the original proposal, STDF will take all measures in order to stop the project and recover the budget allocated.

In the event of receiving a follow-up report that is rejected by evaluators, STDF has the authority to impose additional follow-up reports (totally independent from the regular follow-up reports stated before). In the event that the evaluators of progress reports give a justified recommendation to terminate the project (for any reason, including scientific misconduct by the PI, lack of seriousness,... etc.), STDF reserves the right to terminate the project, in which case STDF will recover all funds and expenses paid prior to the project termination date.

15. Payment of funds:

When a project is approved by STDF, a contract agreement will be signed between STDF and the awarded institution specifying the representative of the institution responsible for implementing the contract.

The budget will be disbursed in four installments, as follows:

- The first installment, equal to 25% of the total budget, will be disbursed at the beginning of the project.
- The second installment, equal to 35% of the total budget, will be disbursed upon acceptance of the first technical report and the related financial report.
- The third installment, equal to 30% of the total budget, will be disbursed upon acceptance of the second (interim) technical report and the related financial reports.
- The second and third installments of the required budget may be disbursed upon the issuance of the purchase order by the awarded institution to the supplying company.
- A final installment, equal to 10% of the total budget, will be disbursed upon acceptance of the final technical report and the related financial reports.

16. Research integrity:

Applicants to STDF are expected to maintain a high level of scientific honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work. Applicants are expected to refrain from plagiarism, i.e. "the act of taking credit, or attempting to take credit, for the work of another" (quoted from the publication ethics policies for medical journals, at www.wame.org). Applicants are also expected to avoid self-plagiarism or multiple submission of the same content in more than one document. Multiple reporting of the same data or results in various projects is also considered self-plagiarism and is strongly discouraged. Fabrication of data or results, or suppression of unexpected results is not accepted by STDF. STDF expects all research activities involving human subjects to strictly follow the bio-ethical guidelines.

Breaching the rules of research integrity will result in halting all research funding activities to the involved parties for a suitable period of time after thorough investigation and judgment by a specialized STDF committee.

18. Important dates:

Deadline date for full proposal submission: 20/5/2012