East-West University Research Development Strategy

EWUNI

East-West University

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Goals and Objectives

1. The presented document has been developed considering the university's mission, strategic development plan, and the experience of various successful universities. Its objective is to define the priorities for scientific research within the university and establish mechanisms to support the research process.
2. The university's academic council determines the priorities for university research, taking into account national priorities, modern trends in research development, as well as the opinions and recommendations of the university's schools.
3. Engagement in scientific research is a key indicator for assessing the quality of the university's academic staff. This metric plays a significant role in evaluating academic staff performance at the end of the academic year. For this purpose, the university's quality assurance department has developed a specialized evaluation form.

University Support for Research Activities

1. The university's research support system includes the establishment and development of research-supporting structures within university schools, the identification of indicators for assessing research efficiency, the implementation of a university grant system, an anti-plagiarism policy, and research information management.
2. To promote and develop scientific research, scientific research development departments have been established within the university's schools. These departments operate under the supervision of the university's vice president responsible for the respective academic direction.
3. The structural unit responsible for research development ensures the facilitation of scientific research, coordinates the integration of research components into the university's educational programs, and provides organizational support for academic staff in conducting scientific activities.
4. To implement activities supporting research development, the relevant structural unit performs the following functions:
   o Develops a research support activity plan for the university school in collaboration with the school's academic team.
   o Coordinates the implementation of the school's research activities, including fundamental, applied, and practical research, as well as experimental and clinical studies, conferences, seminars, workshops, and other research-related events.
   o Analyzes research activity reports from academic and scientific personnel and prepares conclusions and recommendations for submission to the school council.
   o Monitors the implementation of university research grants within the respective school.
   o Prepares evaluations of academic staff's scientific-research activities and develops recommendations for further research development.
   o Facilitates the internationalization of research activities by supporting participation in international scientific projects and the execution of joint research projects, ensuring active university engagement.

5. For the purpose of conducting scientific research, independent research units such as laboratories, research institutes, departments, centers, and other entities may be established within the university, its educational units, or specific academic programs. These units may operate both within Georgia and internationally.

Internal Funding System for Scientific Research Events

1. To support the development of research activities, the university incorporates regulatory provisions for research project funding in its financial planning process. It establishes the rules for funding/co-funding research projects, as well as the criteria and procedures for funding rejection. In cases where significant research projects require additional financial support, the university may allocate extra funds from its budget. Such decisions are made by the university president based on the recommendation of the academic council. The sources of research funding at the university include budgetary allocations for research development and research grants, as well as funding from external sources.

2. The university ensures that the budget allocated for research activities remains at an appropriate level or increases each academic year to promote the sustainability and advancement of research.

3. A key condition for the university's participation in the administration and coordination of scientific research grants is the involvement of academic staff in projects on behalf of the university. To enhance academic staff awareness and encourage their participation in international research projects, the university regularly conducts training sessions on topics such as research grant identification methods, techniques for writing scientific research projects, research grant management, and related areas.

University Research Information Support

1. To enhance the university's involvement in international and local research projects, the university and its structural units strive to increase awareness among academic staff and researchers about research projects and participation opportunities. Additionally, they work to inform the academic community about the university's scientific and research achievements. University personnel and students are provided with information regarding local and international scientific grants and projects.

2. To improve public awareness of the university's academic staff's research activities, the university is committed to increasing the ranking, credibility, and indexation of university publications in global scientific databases. Information about individuals involved in university research, including researchers, reviewers, and their scientific publications, will also be publicly accessible through the university's online scientific portal.

Research Activity Funding Decision

1. The university's academic council makes decisions regarding research activity funding based on the application submitted by the researcher(s) and the recommendations of the structural units and schools responsible for research development.

2. When making funding decisions, the academic council is authorized to invite the administrative and financial vice president, as well as an expert in the relevant scientific field, to the meeting with an advisory voting right.

Grant Competition Objectives, Project Duration, and Budget

1. The goal of the scientific grant competition is to fully activate the research potential of East-West University, generate new knowledge, and facilitate the integration of researchers into internationally relevant scientific projects.
2. The university president allocates funds from the university budget for the competition by official decree.
3. The administration of the competition is carried out by the grant competition commission, which is established by the university president's decree.
4. The total budget for the grant competition is approved by the university president's decree.

Conditions for Participation in the Grant Competition

1. The right to participate in the grant competition and receive funding is primarily granted to affiliated academic staff of East-West University. However, any academic or invited staff member of the university is eligible to submit a project.
2. The project must be submitted by a group of individuals; a person may not participate in more than one project.
3. The project's theme must align with the research priorities of East-West University, which are approved by the university president based on the recommendation of the academic council.
4. The project must have key personnel responsible for executing the project's primary objectives. Key personnel must hold an academic degree equivalent to a doctoral or master's level qualification.
5. The project must have a project leader who is an affiliated academic staff member of East-West University and holds a doctoral degree or an equivalent academic qualification. The project leader is responsible for conducting the planned research, overseeing project implementation, reporting research outcomes, and managing the overall project.
6. The project may include supporting personnel—individuals employed within the project to assist key personnel in addressing technical issues.
7. It is recommended that the project involve foreign consultants—non-Georgian citizens working on the research topic covered by the project—who can provide advisory support to key personnel within the project's research framework.
8. The grant project submitted by a participant in the competition must not be submitted to any other grant competition.

Competition Documentation, Submission Rules, and Deadlines

1. Eligible participants must submit the grant project application along with the required documents within the specified deadlines.

2. The grant project application must include the following documents:
    2.1. Signed application form in both printed and electronic format (Annex 1);
    2.2. Project proposal (Annex 2);
    2.3. Justified project budget (Annex 3);
    2.4. Project implementation plan (Annex 4);
    2.5. Consideration of research ethics within the project and the strategy for ensuring ethical compliance (Annex 5);
    2.6. Letter of consent and CVs from external academic staff or researchers, including international consultants, if applicable.
3. The announcement of the grant competition is made publicly.
4. The deadlines for document submission are determined by the university president's decree.

Grant Project Evaluation

1. Projects that meet the competition requirements are forwarded to an independent group of subject-matter experts, selected by the academic council, for evaluation.
2. The commission is authorized to disqualify projects that do not comply with the established competition requirements.
3. The group of subject-matter experts evaluates projects based on pre-approved criteria.
4. The grant project is assessed on a 50-point scale, based on two main criteria:
    o   The scientific/practical value of the project
    o   The project implementation process. Each main criterion is divided into five sub-criteria, with each sub-criterion scored up to a maximum of 5 points.
5. Evaluation Criteria and Sub-criteria:

Scientific/Practical Value of the Project	
1	Relevance of the Research Topic
2	Novelty of the Research and Definition of Objectives
3	Relevance of Research Methods to the Research Objectives
4	Scientific and Practical Value of the Expected Research Outcomes
5	Dissemination of Research Results

Project Implementation Process	
1	Relevance of the Key Personnel's Qualifications to the Research Objectives

2	Feasibility of Project Implementation and Its Alignment with Research Objectives
3	Relevance of the Project Budget to the Research Objectives and Planned Activities
4	Research Ethics, Risk Analysis, and Risk Management
5	Local and International Collaboration in Project Implementation

1. Evaluation Criteria for Sub-Criteria:

5 Points	The project fully meets the given sub-criterion at the highest level. There may be minor comments, but they do not affect the scientific potential.
4 Points	The project addresses the sub-criterion very well and accurately. Originality and scientific potential are evident, but some refinements are needed.
3 Points	The project meets the sub-criterion well but has certain flaws and requires improvement.
2 Points	The project generally aligns with the sub-criterion but contains significant inaccuracies and weaknesses.
1 Point	The project does not adequately meet the sub-criterion. Evaluation is difficult due to insufficient, vague, or inconsistent information.
0 Points	The project does not meet the sub-criterion at all. Evaluation is impossible due to insufficient, vague, or inconsistent information.

Grant Agreement

1. After the approval of the winning grant projects, the university ensures the signing of agreements with grant recipients and the personnel involved in the projects.
2. The grant agreement will include details regarding the research defined within the project.
3. Upon signing the agreement, grant funding will be disbursed in stages according to a pre-determined schedule. The grant amount will be transferred as an advance payment to the project's designated account. The first installment will be transferred within 30 calendar days of signing the agreement. Each subsequent installment will be disbursed based on the submission of project reports.
4. Changes to the project leader or key personnel members are only allowed in exceptional cases and must be justified with a well-founded explanation.
5. With the approval of the grant committee, modifications to the project's implementation plan and/or budget may be made.

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Monitoring of Grant Project Implementation

1. The grant recipient is required to submit a report on the activities carried out within the project to the university's grant committee at the end of each reporting period, following the forms approved by East-West University.
2. Monitoring includes both financial and implementation oversight:
2.1 **Financial monitoring** ensures that the funds disbursed by the committee under the grant agreement are spent in accordance with the budget specified in the same agreement.
2.2 **Implementation monitoring** involves verifying the report that confirms the achievement of the results planned in the grant agreement.

Additional Requirements

1. The grant recipient is required to publish at least one scientific article in a peer-reviewed journal based on the research materials of the project or to provide proof of acceptance for publication.
2. All publications must explicitly state that the research was conducted with the support of East-West University.

Research Ethics Standard

1. East-West University recognizes and upholds international standards of research ethics. In line with its mission, the university places great importance on fostering awareness of research ethics principles within academic life and establishing appropriate ethical conduct. The research ethics standard is developed based on the university's mission, regulations, and other legal acts.
2. The purpose of this standard is to ensure the objective implementation of research within the university, promote the advancement of scientific and academic activities, uphold academic freedom and impartiality, implement and establish international scientific standards, and facilitate the publication and peer review of high-level research. Additionally, the standard aims to protect the dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of research participants.
3. The standard is based on and upholds the constitutional principle of academic freedom, ensuring the application of high ethical standards in scientific and research activities.
4. The standard defines the principles of research ethics throughout the research process, as well as the status and authority of the research ethics committee.
5. Research ethics encompass a set of moral guidelines and professional codes that researchers adhere to in scientific studies. It emphasizes maintaining confidentiality during data collection, analysis, presentation, and publication. This also includes the right of research subjects to refuse to provide data or express personal opinions.

Academic Freedom

1. Academic freedom is the core value of the university's research strategy. The university recognizes and upholds the principles of academic freedom, which, according to the Georgian "Law on Higher

Education," ensure the right of academic staff, researchers, and students to independently conduct teaching, scientific research, and learning.

2. In accordance with this principle, academic staff, researchers, and students have the right to conduct scientific research on behalf of the university freely, without any pressure, unjustified interference, or restrictions.

Criteria for Research Ethics

1. **Scientific research** is a process that ensures the acquisition of knowledge through observation, hypothesis formulation, experimentation, and result analysis.

2. Any scientific work conducted under the university's name or within its framework must comply with internationally recognized standards. Scientific analysis should be rational, critically evaluate issues, and be based on factual evidence. The research should be open to criticism, verifiable, non-dogmatic, reliable, and founded on analysis rather than instinct.

3. Scientific work conducted under the university's name or within its framework must adhere to key research ethics principles, including: **integrity, objectivity (intersubjectivity), significance, originality, conceptual and linguistic clarity, validity, verifiability, and transparency.**

4. **Integrity** is the fundamental basis of scientific research quality. Researchers must properly acknowledge all sources used and clearly outline their reasoning and argumentation. Data manipulation, falsification, or fabrication of results is strictly prohibited in scientific work.

5. **Scientific research must maintain maximum neutrality** and should not reflect the author's personal biases or opinions regarding the research subject. Researchers' observations and arguments must be formulated objectively and professionally, based on logical reasoning. Researchers should refrain from emotional or unfounded assertions and present various perspectives in the argumentation process, enabling readers to develop independent opinions.

6. **Objectivity and Significance:** Scientific research must contribute to the advancement of a field and the development of new knowledge. Particularly valuable studies are those that provide high levels of information (compilation-based research) or make active contributions to a specific discipline. When selecting a research topic, a researcher should first consider which issues will advance the field, how new knowledge can be generated, and what steps are necessary to address a particular problem.

7. **Originality:** The originality of a scientific work is achieved through the creation of new concepts, the introduction of innovative frameworks, the establishment of new research models/methods, or a novel approach to problem-solving.

8. **Conceptual and Linguistic Clarity:**
   o The language of a scientific work must be simple, precise, and unambiguous. Sentences should be clearly structured to avoid misinterpretation.
   o Researchers should use clear and concise formulations, avoiding figurative language and overly complex sentence structures, which can make comprehension difficult.
   o Proper spelling and stylistic accuracy must be ensured to prevent grammatical or typographical errors.

- o The work should employ **scientific meta-language (descriptive language)** and use specialized terminology only when necessary. If terms with multiple meanings are used, they should be clearly defined to prevent confusion or ambiguity.

9. **Rigor and Justification:** A scientific work must allow for the verification and, if necessary, refutation of its claims. The research problem must be thoroughly analyzed, and the scientific literature and research tools used must be carefully selected. The relationships between various elements should be logically and clearly presented.

10. **Transparency and Verifiability:** Scientific work should be based on verified, reliable facts and data rather than assumptions. Arguments must be meticulously cited and free from errors to enable readers to verify the presented research if desired.

11. **Researcher Responsibility and Impartiality:** Researchers are obligated to present research data accurately and without bias. They should be transparent about the limitations and weaknesses of their research and share this information with colleagues. Researchers must not withhold results, even if their hypothesis is disproven. Their responsibility extends to both research participants and the academic community, requiring adherence to honesty and ethical research principles.

Increasing Academic Staff Engagement in Research

1. When renewing contracts with academic staff, the university considers their realization of scientific research potential and level of engagement in research activities.

2. To support the participation of affiliated academic staff in international research, the university allocates an annual budget for each affiliated staff member: 3,000 GEL for professors, 2,000 GEL for associate professors, and 1,500 GEL for assistant professors. This funding may be used for conducting research activities, financing scientific publications, participating in scientific conferences, and other related purposes.

Final Provisions - Procedure for Adoption and Amendment of the document

1. This document is approved by an order of the President of the university.
2. Amendments to this document are made by an order of the President of the university.

"Approved"
President of East-West University

Giorgi Khurodze