

Science and Technology Human Resource Development Project

General Guideline for Partnerships with Foreign Universities

(Guidelines applicable to Technology Faculties and the Engineering Faculty supported by STHRD Project)

Introduction

1. A component of Output No. 3 of the STHRD Project is to support the Universities to establish partnerships with renowned foreign universities in areas such as
 - (i) faculty or student exchange programs;
 - (ii) innovative teaching and learning at higher education; and
 - (iii) joint research activities, especially in industry relevant areas, etc.

The project will provide grants to support proposals competitively selected by a technical committee established by the Ministry of City Planning, Water Supply and Higher Education (MCPWR&HE) and University Grants Commission (UGC). The project management unit (PMU) and UGC will monitor the financial and technical progress, respectively.

2. In order to perform above functions by the university, the relevant powers provided to the university by the Universities Act No. 18 of 1978 are as follows:

“29. Subject to the powers, duties and functions of the Commission, a University shall have power –

(c) to co-operate, by way of exchange of teachers, students and scholars or otherwise, with other Universities or institutions in Sri Lanka or abroad, having objects similar or substantially similar to those of the University;

(d) to provide postgraduate courses, and for this purpose, to co-operate with other universities or authorities in Sri Lanka or abroad, in such manner and for such purposes as the University may determine;

(r) to make arrangements for conducting courses or parts of courses in educational institutions outside the University, in accordance with any By-law providing for the same;

(t) to do all such other acts and things, whether incidental to the powers aforesaid or not, as may be requisite in order to further the objects of the University.”

Broad Guidelines for Partnerships with Foreign Universities

3. Partnerships with renowned foreign universities is to have an accelerated process to establish high quality degree programmes and research meeting national as well as international standards.
4. Receiving a service from a renowned foreign university for curriculum development, innovative teaching practices etc. is not always suitable through a competitive bidding process. Ideally, a partnership brings benefits to both universities based on predetermined objectives and both

universities will contribute by allocating resources in the form of finance and/or in kind to make the partnership sustainable.

5. New Faculties of Technology or Engineering in Sri Lankan universities must search for renowned universities abroad who are willing to enter into partnerships. In the initial stages, Sri Lankan universities may receive more contributions from the renowned foreign universities than they can offer to the foreign universities. The resources contribution to the partnership may be based on the benefits obtained by each party.
6. Universities must search for renowned foreign universities that are willing to enter into partnerships and have internal assessment to identify the most suitable university. The rationale of selecting particular university needs to be submitted to the technical committee through PMU in the form of a proposal for international partnership, which includes evidence of the search and the report of internal assessment. The universities are also encouraged to strengthen the Sri Lanka academics in overseas renowned university to strengthen brain circulation and brain linkage.
7. Faculty or student exchange programmes:
 - i) Exchange of faculty staff members between partnering universities will bring greater benefits to Sri Lankan universities in the form of curriculum improvements, innovative teaching/learning methodologies, assessment methodologies, quality assurance mechanisms, joint international research etc. for improvement of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and research. Faculty members travelling to each university may be small in number per year and their stay may be a few weeks, in most instances. There may be instances that faculty members spend a semester teaching the students of the partner university or engaged in research.
 - ii) Exchange of students between the partnering universities using public funds must be cautiously approached as only a very limited number of Sri Lankan students will benefit from such activity. Students who have shown exceptional merit in academic related activities may be considered in a transparent manner to participate in exchange programmes. Sri Lankan universities may receive students from foreign universities, with prior approval of the UGC, under exchange programmes. Student exchange programmes may be for predetermined activities which will enhance academic, social or cultural standing or it may be pursuing the studies of a particular semester.
8. Innovative teaching and learning as well as accreditation in higher education:
 - i) Faculties of Technology in Sri Lankan universities mostly have newly recruited faculty members who have little or no experience in using innovative teaching and learning methods in teaching technology disciplines. Experienced faculty members of foreign universities may assist these new staff by making short visits to Sri Lankan universities to support both technology and engineering faculties. When the experienced foreign faculty visits Sri Lanka, each university makes effort to share such resources by organizing seminar and workshops which are open to other universities.
 - ii) Engineering and Technology degrees are Professional Degrees that should earn accreditation from relevant professional bodies. Professional bodies require independent evaluation of degrees, assessment standards and quality assurance by external academics who serve as External Examiners. Senior Academics of the renowned foreign university may perform this function periodically under the partnership agreement.

9. Joint research activities, especially in industry related areas:
 - i) Joint research activities must be a major area of collaboration under the partnership. Both universities (countries) must benefit from the research undertaken. Since Technology and Engineering faculties are offering industry oriented undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, the research activities must also be in industry related areas. The mechanisms of formulating the Research Proposals and the ways of conducting research must be agreed by the partnering universities.
 - ii) Matters relating to financing of research, publication of research outputs and the ownership of intellectual property must be agreed between the partnering universities.

Funding of partnerships with foreign universities

Funding will be made available from the allocation at the STHRD project of MCPWR&HE in the following manner;

10. Collaborations with renowned foreign universities can be considered to be funded based on the proposals submitted by the universities. The proposal must include the selection procedure followed, planned activities under the collaboration in keeping with items 7, 8 and 9 above, operating arrangements including the draft Memorandum of Understanding or equivalent instrument between the two universities, the financial and in-kind contributions from the two universities and the disbursement schedule and how the Intellectual Property originating from research activities will be owned.
11. Proposals must be screened at the Faculty Board level and submitted to the Project Coordination Committee (PCC) chaired by Vice Chancellor, and then submitted to the PMU. Proposals received will be evaluated by the Technical Committee consisting of representatives of the MCPWR&HE, UGC and the PMU and fund allocations will be provided. Monitoring and evaluation of the collaborations will be performed by the same Technical Committee.
12. The foreign partnering university may be issued a letter of intent by the Sri Lankan university, without legal obligation, if the foreign partnering university plans to apply for funding from another agency for the purpose of the proposed partnership.
13. Maximum allocation to each proposal will be US\$ 0.5 million under this category.

Proposal Submission.

14. There will be two-stage submission process. The first stage is concept paper for initial screening and second stage is full proposal for approval. The first stage concept paper should include (i) objectives and outputs aligned with STHRD's impact and outcome, (ii) rationale of the partnership, (iii) description and planned selection process for the candidate partner institutions which satisfy ADB's member country eligibility requirements; (iv) scope of collaboration, (v) possibility of downstream collaboration works, (vi) initial cost estimate, (vii) proposed collaboration period, (viii) team member, (ix) capacity of academic staff, (x) approval of university. The concept paper template is in Appendix 1. Once the concept paper is approved, applicants will submit second stage full proposal which will include, but will not be limited to, (i)

detailed timeline, (ii) detailed estimated cost, (iii) detailed scope of collaboration (terms of reference), and (iv) sustainability of the partnership, in addition to the items included in the concept paper. The second stage full proposal should also reflect comments and suggestions provided by the technical committee at the approval of the concept paper. The proposals will be submitted to the project management unit (PMU) at MCPWR&HE.

Appendix 1

Concept Paper Template

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|---|
| 1. Objectives |
| This needs to be aligned with STHRDP impact, outcome and outputs principles. |
| 2. Rationale of the partnership |
| Provide justifications and rationale of the need for this partnership. |
| 3. Description and planned selection process for the candidate partner institutions |
| Describe the candidate partner institutions, and make sure they are located in ADB eligible member countries (i.e., 66 ADB member countries excluding Belgium). |
| Describe the selection or search process for the candidate partner institutions. |
| Partner institutions may be selected by the IAs on the basis of pre-existing partnerships, expressions of interest undertaken by the IAs, or other methods. |
| 4. Scope of collaboration |
| Briefly describe the scope of collaboration. |
| 5. Possibility of downstream collaboration works |
| Briefly describe downstream collaboration works (if any) |
| 6. Initial cost estimate |
| Provide rough cost breakdown by main activities, and discuss value for money. |
| 7. Proposed collaboration period |
| MM YYYY – MM YYYY |
| 8. Team member |
| List up all the team members of this proposal. |
| 9. Capacity of academic staff |
| Discuss previous similar research experiences |
| 10. Approval of Faculty Board/university |
| Clarify if this concept paper has been approved for submission. |

- Assessment Ratings -
- 1 – Does not satisfy
 - 2 – Marginally satisfy
 - 3 – Satisfy

Note: All bullet points must be rated according to the above rating criteria. Critical fields are marked by bullet (*) and these fields should have received rating 3 (satisfy), together with satisfactory ratings for other fields in the opinion of the Technical Committee for a proposal to be acceptable. For the purpose of ranking the proposals, cumulative of ratings 2 and 3, ignoring ratings 1, will be taken.

| Proposal | Rating | Key reason(s) for the rating |
|---|--------|--|
| 1. Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the objectives clearly stated? * Are the objectives aligned to the STHRD Project outputs? • Are the objectives likely to be achieved during the stated time frame? | | |
| 2. Rationale of the partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Is the need for partnership clearly justified? | | |
| 3. Description and planned selection process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the proposed partnering institute situated in an ADB member state? * Is the method used for identifying the partnering institute acceptable?(Ref. para 7 of Annex1) * If there had been a selection process, is it a transparent process to select the partnering institute according to ADB guidelines? | Yes/No | (if No, the assessment process terminated) |
| 4. Scope of collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Is the scope of collaboration aligned with the objectives? • Do the activities identified adequate to achieve the objectives? • Will the activities identified likely to make a positive impact for the development of the Department/Faculty? | | |
| 5. Possibility of downstream collaboration works, if any <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the set objectives provide for downstream collaborations? • Do the downstream works identified as continuation of the main proposal? • Is there a flexibility in the proposal not to continue to downstream works, if the objectives are not fully achieved? | | |
| 6. Cost estimates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the cost estimate comprehensive and cover all activities? | | |

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|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the components such as cost of travel and living expenses comply with government regulations? * Are the benefits of the collaboration match with money spent? | | |
| <p>7. Proposed collaboration period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the period of collaboration match with the time required to accomplish the activities identified in the scope? | | |
| <p>8. Team members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the list of team members available? • Do sufficient number of staff members benefit from the activities? • Is the services of a Consultant(s) obtained and a justification to that effect is provided? | | |
| <p>9. Capacity of academic staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there staff members with similar collaborative/research experience involved in the activities? • Can the academic staff devote sufficient time for the activities of collaboration? | | |
| <p>10. Approval of the university</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the approval of the Vice Chancellor available for the Concept Paper (Initial Proposal)? • Is the approval of the Council of the university available for the final proposal and the agreement? | | |

Comments of the Technical Committee:

Recommendation:

Signatures.