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## **RESEARCH POLICY**

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## **FOREWORD**

The world of university education requires continued quality research input to support programme content, teaching methods, and contribution to national and global development. Public universities are particularly tasked with production of public goods and provision of public service because of their dependency on public funding to carry out their mandates. I am glad that Rongo University has produced appropriate guidelines, in the form of Research Policy, to serve as beacon in navigating the increasingly complex field of research for her staff and associates. Matters of the requisite constitutional and legal bases, financing, processes and standards expected for the researches and their products to be considered of high quality are well canvassed in the Policy. I expect that the Policy will facilitate even more activity in basic and applied research to boost the contribution of the University to the general pool of information, products and other services for the development of our country and humankind

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

**DR. RACHEL MASAKE**

**CHAIRPERSON OF COUNCIL**

## **PREFACE**

The Rongo University Charter, 2017 lays the foundation for the research function of the University. Research often involves interaction between the University itself and various actors, members of the University themselves and other stakeholders. Therefore, there is the need to provide guidelines for such interaction, especially because the University, more or less underwrites research by the members of the university or other associated persons by virtue of the Science, Technology and Innovations Act, 2013, Part VI, subsection (2). The Research Policy provides the broad framework for streamlining research into the University's core business. It also provides a supportive environment to motivate staff to undertake sustainable research in competitive national and international arena in addition, it is also provides the regulations for research and consultancy services by members of the University. It embeds research and related activities in the Constitutional and legal framework, and provides for modest internal financial support, administrative structures and processes, ethical and acceptable research practices, and dissemination of research findings and products. I wish to thank the various Committees, and Boards that participated in the development and approval of the Policy.

**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....

**PROF. SAMUEL GUDU**

**VICE-CHANCELLOR**

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>ARG</b>	Annual Research Grants
<b>CD-ROM</b>	Compact Disc Read Only Memory
<b>IREC</b>	Institutional Research and Ethics Committee
<b>NACOSTI</b>	National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>PI</b>	Principal Investigator
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research and Development
<b>RUIPP</b>	Rongo University Intellectual Property Policy
<b>SRC</b>	School Research Committee
<b>TVET</b>	Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>UREC</b>	University Research and Extension Committee
<b>URF</b>	University Research Fund

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

In this document, unless expressly stated:

**Ethics** means moral conduct in relation to research activity involving humans, animals or the environment;

**Extension** means working with the community to pass on already tested technologies and services

**Force Majeure** means unforeseeable or unpreventable conditions;

**Inaugural lecture** means an open, structured talk given by a scholar who has just attained the position of professorship

**Innovation** means new or creative thinking or product that provides better solutions to existing and future needs

**Intellectual property** means intangible products of the mind

**Junior research grant** means project funding for young members of the University just at the start of their careers

**Minor equipment** means inexpensive tools, machines and allied objects

**Misconduct** means falsification, intellectual theft, fabrication, wilful disinformation'

**Multidisciplinary** means having more than one field of study or specialists from different areas of human learning

**Outreach** means provision of services, information and knowledge to the community

**Public lecture** means an open structured talk given by prominent members of society including eminent scholars

**Research** means systematic and documented investigation of stated subjects for generation of facts

**Senior research grant** means project funding for mature and established researchers

# **1. BACKGROUND OF THE UNIVERSITY**

## **1.1 The Vision**

A world class technology driven University in learning and practice

## **1.2 The Mission**

To provide quality and innovative higher education through teaching, research and community service

## **1.3 Core Values**

1. Integrity
2. Professionalism
3. Innovation
4. Equity
5. Social responsibility

## **1.4 Mandate of the University**

The University derives its mandate from the Rongo University Charter of 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2016, which stipulates the objects and functions of the University as follows:

- a) Provide directly, or in collaboration with other institutions of higher learning, facilities for technological, professional, and scientific education;
- b) advance knowledge and its practical application by research and other means;
- c) disseminate the outcomes of research by various means and commercially exploit the results of such research;
- d) participate in scientific and technological innovation as well as in the generation, discovery, transmission and enhancement of knowledge and to stimulate the intellectual life in the economic, social, cultural, scientific, and technological development;

- e) contribute to scientific, technological and industrial development of society in collaboration with industry and other organizations;
- f) make proposals for new academic programmes culminating in degrees, diplomas and certificates;
- g) make proposals for the establishment of colleges, campuses, faculties, schools, institutes, directorates, departments, centres and other resource and administrative units as may be appropriate;
- h) inculcate a culture of innovation in technology, engineering and science amongst staff, students, and society;
- i) promote education in social dynamics, science and technology within the institution and society;
- j) develop an institution of excellence in teaching, training, scholarship, entrepreneurship, research, consultancy, community service, among other educational services and products;
- k) provide a multi-level system of education and training that is relevant to the needs of the local, national and global community covering a wide range of fields and levels with provision for recognition of prior learning and flexibility of transition between educational levels;
- l) play a leading role in the development and expansion of opportunities for socio-cultural, technological and vocational education and training;
- m) provide high quality educational, research, residential, commercial, cultural, social, recreational, sporting, and other facilities;
- n) facilitate student mobility between programmes of study at different accredited technical training institutions, polytechnics, and universities;
- o) promote critical enquiry, independence and creativity in education, training and research within the institution;
- p) participate in commercial ventures and activities that promote the objectives of the institution;
- q) foster the general welfare of students and staff;
- r) provide equal opportunity for development and further training for staff of the institution;
- s) develop and provide educational, cultural, professional, technical and vocational services to the community and, in particular, the fostering of corporate social responsibility;



- t) provide programmes, products, and services in ways that reflect the principles of equity and social justice;
- u) conduct examinations for, and grant such, academic awards as may be provided for in the Statutes, and to syndicate examinations for awards at other institutions as may be approved by the Senate;
- v) generally, facilitate the development and provision of appropriate and accessible academic and other programmes.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH POLICY**

- 2.1 Provide framework for funding, coordination and promotion of University research;
- 2.2 Focus research efforts to achieving University mission and vision.
- 2.3 Facilitate the collection and maintenance of University Research Records
- 2.4 Facilitate researchers to form multi-disciplinary teams to bid for research contracts.
- 2.5 Enhance the capacity of researchers to form viable linkages with industry and other research institutions to compete for national and international funding opportunities.

## **3. JUSTIFICATION**

Every possible care has been taken to make the guidelines in this policy to be in compliant with the provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, Kenya, Science, Technology & Innovation Act, 2013 Universities Act, 2014 and revisions thereof, other relevant National Laws; and the various National agenda, including Vision 2030

The need for well-coordinated research efforts necessitates that a number of factors that include efficient use of scarce research resources, fostering supportive environment for collaborative research and consultancy, providing clear guidelines for research and consultancy and motivating staff to seek research funding are put in place. Thus research is one of the major mandates of the University where the institution focuses. Universities world over are known by their research output. Research performance is the springboard to world fame and it is one of the major factors in the Universities global ranking.

The Policy is required to help University to attract internal and external Research grants from development partners; create an enabling environment for collaborative research with national and international partners and foster productive research with the private sector.

The University recognizes the role of research in effective teaching, and promotes active research among staff to create new knowledge and innovations to support development of teaching programs, and to enhance participation of students in research activities. Since the University recognizes the need for both basic and applied research as complementary and indispensable, it shall support appropriate funding for both within the confines of its policy.

In particular, it will fund strategic research with potential to generate innovations in products and processes for purposes of obtaining intellectual property rights and therefore funding for the University.

The policy shall help identify research areas in which the University has competitive advantage, and develop them as research foci and centers of academic excellence. This will involve profiling such centers in terms of existing research strengths and innovations. The defining features of these centers will be the existence of, potential for sustained research and innovation; production of patentable products, publications, training of students; and encouragement of multidisciplinary research teams in and outside the University.

#### **4. THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH FUNDS**

The University Council recognizes that research is a core business of the University, and shall therefore establish a University Research Fund (URF) and allocate 2% of its operational budget to research activities; provided that the allocation may be determined by Council from time to time.

##### **4.1 Broad Principles of University Research Fund**

The URF shall be disbursed for various research activities within the University under the following guiding principles:

- (a) The need to support original, productive and strategic basic and applied research.
- (b) The need to provide a significant internal research budget and its potential to leverage external funding for research within the University.
- (c) The need to develop strategic research foci and centers of excellence.

- (d) The need to support and develop an active and vibrant postgraduate research environment.
- (e) The need to build capacity for research in the University in terms of staff training and infrastructure development.
- (f) The need to foster multi-disciplinary and collaborative research both internally and externally.
- (g) The need to reward demonstrated excellence in research and publication among staff.
- (h) Promote multidisciplinary approach in problem solving through research partnerships, internally between schools/directorates/departments/centers or with external partners.

## **4.2 Sources and Allocations of the University Research Fund**

### **4.2.1 Sources**

The sources of funds for the URF shall include the following:

- i. 5% of the institution's total recurrent revenue.
- ii. 25% of the 10% administrative retention fees charged on all research grants.
- iii. Conference registration fees.
- iv. Proceeds from commercialized intellectual property rights.
- v. Endowment funds for research.

### **4.2.2 Allocation of the University Research Fund**

The URF shall be allocated to support the following activities in the proportions stated hereunder:

- i. Annual Research Grant (ARG)-60.0%
- ii. Outreach and extension Fund – 20.0%
- iii. Inaugural Lectures – 2%
- iv. Annual Research Workshops – 5%
- v. Public Lectures – 2%
- vi. Publication Awards – 3.0%
- vii. Office operations – 5.0%
- viii. Innovation and Intellectual Property Rights – 3.0%

#### **4.2.2.1 Uses of the University Research Fund**

##### **Annual Research Grants (ARG)**

The ARG shall be used for:

- I. Funding competitive Junior Research Grants within the University.
- II. Funding competitive Senior Research Grants.

The proportion of the ARG that shall be used for any of the above categories may be varied from time to time by the UCREC, with authority of Senate and Council.

#### **4.2.2.2 Funding Competitive Research within the University**

Grants shall normally be awarded annually to competitive research proposals in each School and administration.

##### **(a) Junior Research Grants**

- I. The Junior Research Grants will comprise between 5.0% and 10% of the ARG.
- II. Funding under this category will only be available during the first three years on first appointment for junior staff and shall be awarded only once to any staff.
- III. Funding may be applied for at any time during the period of eligibility.

##### **(b) Senior Research Grants**

The Senior Research Grants shall make up between 90% and 95% of ARG. These funds will normally be distributed to schools on an equitable basis, in proportion to the number of academic staff in each school.

#### **4.2.2.3 Principles of Awarding Competitive Research Grants**

The evaluation of the research proposals will be guided by some or all of the following principles:

- i. Originality.
- ii. Potential to generate new knowledge and/or products.
- iii. Involvement of students.
- iv. Contribution to development of new research foci with potential for academic and research excellence.
- v. Multidisciplinary approach to solving stated problems.
- vi. Potential to leverage funding from external source.

- vii. Contribution to fulfilling Rongo University vision and mission.
- viii. Gender equity.

The UREC shall provide the application guidelines.

#### **4.2.2.4 Extension and Outreach Fund**

The 20% fund for research and extension shall be used to support activities for the dissemination of research findings, services and products for community development and developing partnerships with industry to enhance research and extension networks. The administration of this fund shall be as provided for in the Rongo University Extension and Outreach Policy.

#### **4.2.2.5 Inaugural Lectures**

Inaugural lectures shall normally be supported by funds provided by the URF up to a maximum of 2.0% of this fund in any one year.

Disbursement of such funds shall be made by the office responsible for Research and Extension.

#### **4.2.2.6 Minor Equipment Maintenance and Repair Fund**

The repairs and minor replacements shall be those that cannot be obtained using University teaching allocations and equipment votes.

The departments and/or Research Centers in eligible Schools for each allocation shall submit a proposal to the office responsible for the management of the URF.

#### **4.2.2.7 Annual Research Workshops, Seminars and Conferences**

The 5% of URF will be used for Research workshops, Seminars/Conferences that enhance competence in research shall be carried out annually to sensitize the young, and update seasoned scholars to the need for continued research in their specializations.

#### **4.2.2.8 Public Lectures**

The 2% of URF will be used to spearhead public lectures from renowned researchers, experts in various fields, and heads of national or international organizations for the purpose of revitalizing or establishing links with other institutions.

#### **4.2.2.9 Office Operations**

The 5% of the URF shall be used for operations of the Research and Extension Committees, repair of minor equipment and any other required facilitation.

#### **4.2.2.10 Research and Extension Awards**

The Rongo University Research and Extension Awards will be conferred annually to deserving staff by the Chancellor.

The office responsible for Research and Extension will provide guidelines on the criteria and mode of nomination.

#### **4.2.2.11 Publication Awards**

The 3% publications award will be used to fund referred journals and outstanding research. The proportions will be determined by the Research Committee.

#### **Support for Rongo University Based Refereed Journals**

Rongo University will support refereed journals in schools to publish and disseminate research findings.

#### **Award for Outstanding Research**

The publications award will be given to a staff member who will have published the highest number of quality papers in refereed journals.

#### **4.2.2.12 Innovation and Invention Awards**

Members of staff who will have developed an innovation, or invented products or processes will be awarded from the 3% URF. The criteria, type and cost of the award shall be determined by Council from time to time on recommendations from research committee.

### **5. FUNDING FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES**

For the purpose of this policy, funding from external sources shall include both cash grants and material donations, such as equipment and chemicals. The University shall encourage research

funding from external sources to supplement the internal funding. The University shall recognize the attraction of external funds and reward such researchers with a token equivalent to 3% of the administrative costs to the University.

## **6. CO-ORDINATION OF RESEARCH AT RONGO UNIVERSITY**

All research in the University shall normally be coordinated by the Directorate of Research under the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs through the University Research and Extension Committee of Senate (UREC).

### **6.1 University Research and Extension Committee (UREC)**

#### 6.1.1. Composition

The UREC shall comprise

- I. Deputy Vice Chancellor, for the time being in charge of research – Chairperson;
- II. Director of Research (Secretary
- III. Director of Extension and Outreach;
- IV. One representative from each School;
- V. University Librarian and t
- VI. Technology Transfer Officer
- VII. Deputy Vice Chancellor for the time being in charge of Finance (in-attendance);
- VIII. Registrar, in the Division for the time being in charge of research (in-attendance)
- IX. Finance Officer (in-attendance)..

#### **6.1.2 Terms of reference for UREC**

The UREC shall be responsible for all operational research matters in the University. Specifically, it shall:

- i. Advertise process and approve award of research grants from the URF and other University funds on recommendation from the SRCs.

- ii. Identify and alert researchers within the University on national and international funding opportunities.
- iii. Monitor and evaluate utilization of University research grants.
- iv. Investigate and determine reported or alleged misconduct in research and determine the penalty according to established rules, regulation and the law.
- v. Spearhead development and review of research and related policies and plans from time to time.
- vi. Hold annual training in proposal writing and research skills.
- vii. Create, develop and sustain conducive environment for research.

## **6.2 The School Research Committee**

All Schools shall establish School Research Committees (SRCs). The Committees shall be made up of elected representatives from Departments in the School.

For the purpose of this policy, the administrative staff shall form one unit similar to a School.

### **The functions of the SRCs shall be to:-**

- i. Review, evaluate and shortlist all applications from members of that school.
- ii. Promote collaborative research across departments and disciplines.
- iii. Establish discipline-specific guidelines for all applicants.
- iv. Take initiative to source for external funding.
- v. Assist UREC to investigate alleged cases of misconduct in research.
- vi. Monitor and evaluate research activities.
- vii. Profile centers of excellence within University.

### **I. ADMINISTRATION OF RESEARCH GRANTS**

- II. The administration of research grants will be done as outlined by the funding agencies (internal & external).
- III. The University shall normally retain 10% of all external and internal research grants received through the institution to meet its research management costs, or as agreed with the external partner(s).



- IV. The PI shall submit half year technical and financial reports to the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs through the respective SRC.

## **8. RESEARCH AND EXTENSION RESOURCE CENTRE**

The University Librarian shall establish a Research and Extension Resource Centre within the Special Collections section. The section shall contain all records of research and extension activities in the University. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (A&SA), shall provide the materials for archiving in the center.

## **9. RESEARCH PRODUCTS INNOVATIONS AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS ISSUES**

Research products, including data, research papers, designs, and such others, shall be handled in line with industrial property laws and the University's Intellectual Property Policy. Publications arising from research work carried out by a researcher for or on behalf of the University shall be subject to approval by the relevant

## **10. MISCONDUCT IN RESEARCH**

For the purposes of this policy, misconduct in research is defined to include plagiarism, fabrication and falsification of research and research products and misappropriation or conversion of research resources. Rongo University shall therefore promote honesty, trust and openness in research and collaboration with partners. This will improve the quality and quantity of research and protect the reputation of researchers, the University and the collaborating partners.

All alleged cases of misconduct in research will be investigated and disciplinary measures taken as in line with the Rongo University Intellectual Policy (RUIPP).

## **11. COLLABORATION IN RESEARCH**

### **11.1 Collaboration with the Private Sector or Public Institutions**

Rongo University shall encourage collaborative and mutually beneficial research with the private sector and other public institutions. The publication ownership and use of products and processes so created shall be subject to the specific research contracts and the relevant provisions of the RUCIPP.

## **12. PURCHASE, MAINTENANCE, AND OWNERSHIP OF RESEARCH EQUIPMENT**

The purchase, ownership and maintenance of equipment shall be as per research contract and University rules.

## **13. NON-PERFORMANCE OF FUNDED RESEARCH**

Non-performance of funded research may arise from force majeure or from controllable factors.

### **13.1 Force Majeure/Act of God**

Non-Performance of a research being undertaken by a University Researcher, where such is occasioned by circumstances beyond the reasonable control of Rongo University and/or the donor agency, shall be dealt with as provided for by the Force Majeure provisions in the research contract and the Kenyan law.

### **13.2 Non-performance Arising from Controllable Factors**

All research contracts shall have provisions for resolving conflicts on non-performance of funded research arising from controllable factors by the University, the donor or the researcher.

## **14. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The University is committed to conducting research that conforms to acceptable ethical principles. In pursuit of this ideal, all research proposals presented for funding through the University shall undergo ethical review and approval by the Institutional Research and Ethics Committee (IREC). All proposed research involving animal and human subjects, or those that have potential to adversely transform the environment, shall be reviewed by the IREC, and permission to proceed shall be given only if the highest ethical standards have been met. The SRCs shall identify discipline or sector specific research ethical issues in proposed research within Schools, and establish mechanisms for ethical review of proposals in collaboration with IREC.

## **15. EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Policy shall be effective from the date it is approved by Council

## **16. AMENDMENTS**

This Policy may be amended by Council from time to time as may be necessary