THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT APPLIED RESEARCH FUND (WDARF) GRANT CALL - 2022

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 The Institute for Adult Learning (IAL), an Autonomous Institute of the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), administers the Workforce Development Applied Research Fund (WDARF) on behalf of SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG).

1.2 SSG drives and coordinates the implementation of the national SkillsFuture movement, promotes a culture of lifelong learning and a quality ecosystem of Training and Adult Education (TAE) in Singapore. Through a holistic system of national SkillsFuture initiatives, SSG enables Singaporeans to take charge of their learning journey in their pursuit of skills mastery. SSG also works with key stakeholders to ensure that students and adults have access to high quality and industry-relevant training that meets the demands of different sectors of the economy for a skilled and productive workforce.

1.3 The IAL inspires thought leadership and develops evidence-informed Continuing Education and Training (CET) and best practices through our practice-based research. With IAL's programmes, initiatives, and consulting services, IAL advocates new paradigms in learning by sustaining capability building and offering business solutions to enhance workforce capabilities and also advocates and enables learning innovation to bring adult learning to greater heights in this technological age.

1.4 The Workforce Development Applied Research Fund ("**WDARF**"), a national-level research fund set up by the SkillsFuture Singapore Agency, aims to foster high quality and rigorous applied research in workforce development and lifelong learning to support the SkillsFuture Singapore Agency's key thrusts and national-level policies. It encourages inter-disciplinary research and seeks to strengthen research capabilities, through leveraging both local and international expertise.

1.5　　The WDARF Grant Call is administered by IAL on behalf of SSG. The WDARF Grant funds research proposals on a competitive basis across eligible Singapore-based institutions. These are defined as follows:

a. Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) such as the Universities, Polytechnics and ITE who have their campuses in Singapore; and

b. Local organisations with research unit such as:
    i. Research Institutes
    ii. Social/industry groups
    iii. Continuing Education and Training (CET) Providers
    iv. Government organisations

1.6　　To be considered for funding through the WDARF, proposed research should fulfil the below criteria:

a. Applied Research:

WDARF only supports proposals that focus on applied research. Applied research refers to original investigation undertaken to acquire new knowledge with the primary aim of solving an existing problem or improving a current practice. Proposals with targeted research findings and insights that can be scaled and translated into policy and practice in the area of skills development and adult learning in Singapore will be considered.

b. Fit into one of the three research themes, and/or seek to address the Challenge Statements.

Research Themes

Theme A: Developing Effective Adult Learning Pedagogies & Skills Development Strategies

Theme B: Facilitating Learning & Career Choices among Adult Learners

Theme C: Enhancing Employment Outcomes through Adult Learning & Skills Development

For more details on the Research Themes, please refer to the WDARF Research Focus.

Challenge Statements:

Challenge Statement #1: Overcoming barriers to participation.

How can we better understand barriers and motivations faced by specific learner groups, i.e. mature workers, non-degree holders, low-wage workers, persons with disabilities in participating in CET? Are there more learner groups facing significant barriers to participation in lifelong learning? How can we better support and encourage/nudge these groups to advance their skills/training development journey through signposting, incentives and government programmes, and/or enhanced education and career guidance or any other proposed means? What are some inventive ways we can adopt to overcome any barriers to participation in lifelong learning?

Challenge Statement #2: Don't PET the CET.

What are the differences in learning and training approaches between that for working adults and pre-employment training? What principles of learning and training apply well to working adults but not pre-employment students? Conversely, what pedagogical/andragogical principles can apply well to both demographics? What relevant pedagogical/andragogical approaches are we able to create which focus on honing the learning of working adults?

Challenge Statement #3: Digitalising adult learning.

How do we define and measure "good" use of the digital medium for adult learning? What modes – synchronous/asynchronous; hybrid/single-mode; gamified etc. – are most effective under what circumstances? How may we best harness the digital means to strengthen adult learning?

Challenge Statement #4: Every workplace a learning workplace.

What companies succeed in building a learning workplace for themselves? How can the rest be helped? What modes of workplace learning (e.g. OJT,

WSP) work best under what circumstances? How may we best enhance workplace learning opportunities – formal, informal and non-formal – to make workforce learning a norm for all?

c. Original Research

Proposed research should stand up to scrutiny for its originality, addressing gaps which have not been covered in existing WDARF-approved projects, in addition to remaining distinct from relevant up-to-date published research literature.

The list and write-ups of existing WDARF-approved projects are available in IAL website.

1.7   The research proposals will be reviewed by a technical expert review panel and approved by SSG Research Committee.

2.   Key Timeline of the Grant Call

Grant Call Open	24 June 2022
Deadline for Submission of EOI	20 July 2022
Decision on EOI Outcome	Mid August 2022
Submission of Full Proposal (For shortlisted EOIs only)	Mid September 2022
Announcement of Grant Call Results	End March 2023

3.   Application

Submission of Expression of Interest (EOI)

3.1   Interested applicants must submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) using the prescribed WDARF EOI Form through their Host Institutions' Office of Research

(or equivalent) and endorsed by the Director, Office of Research (or equivalent) by the deadline mentioned above. Incomplete or late submissions will be rejected.

3.2   EOIs will be reviewed by SSG. Shortlisted applicants will be informed to submit full proposals.

Submission of Full Proposal

3.3   A full proposal is to be submitted using the prescribed WDARF Application Form (Form A2). All applications must be verified by the Host Institutions' Office of Research (or equivalent) and endorsed by the Director, Office of Research (or equivalent) before it can be considered for evaluation.

3.4   Host Institutions (with the exception of the IHLs) are to complete the 'Application for Eligibility for Workforce Development Applied Research Fund' (Form A1).

3.5   All applications shall be duly completed. Proposals will be rejected for incomplete submissions (e.g. missing documents, missing signatures, sections left blank and so on) and failure to adhere to templates provided (e.g. proposal template, timeline and so on). Applicants are strongly encouraged to collaborate closely with potential users of the research to foster the effective translation of research into policy or practice, and to provide details on these collaborations in the submitted proposals.

3.6   Applicants shall ensure that all information provided in the proposal is accurate and not misleading at the point of submission.

3.7   All applications and accompanying documents must be submitted through the Host Institutions' Office of Research (or equivalent) to SSG through IAL. Host Institutions shall send all finalised documents (in both word and pdf version) to research@ial.edu.sg by the deadline mentioned above.

3.8   SSG reserves the right to reject late or incomplete submissions of proposals.

<u>Application Forms</u>

3.9   The following are forms required for submission of EOI and full proposals.

Name of Form	Form	Applicant to Note
Expression of Interest (EOI)	WDARF 2022_EOI_Final.docx	To be submitted by 20 July 2022
Application for Eligibility for Workforce Development Applied Research Fund (Form A1)	Form A1_Application form	To be submitted for shortlisted EOIs that are invited to submit full proposal. Not applicable for IHLs.
Summary listing of all research proposals	Form A6_WDARF Summary of submiss	To be submitted for shortlisted EOIs that are invited to submit full proposal.
All endorsed research proposal applications (Form A2).	Form A2_ Application for WDA	To be submitted for shortlisted EOIs that are invited to submit full proposal.

For resubmitted proposals, reviewers' comments must be addressed accordingly. |

4. Eligibility

4.1 The research must be conducted in Singapore, and on issues relating to Singapore. Comparative studies with other countries are acceptable if deemed to be appropriate to the research study. Research proposals can cut across the different research themes.

4.2 The WDARF Grant Call is open to all local Host Institutions. Foreign institutions and researchers may partner a Host Institution for the grant call. Foreign researchers may participate as Principal Investigator, Co- Principal Investigator or Collaborator.

4.3 SSG reserves the right to disqualify, discontinue funding or reject any project team in the event of the withdrawal or change of PI and co-PIs.

4.4 The WDARF Grant allows for joint submission from eligible institutions. However, the disbursement of the grant will be made only to the primary Host Institution.

4.5 The Principal Investigator may submit more than one (1) proposal but funding a Principal Investigator for more than one (1) proposal at a time will only occur in exceptional circumstances. Principal Investigators with existing approved projects may submit proposals.

4.6 Research proposals already funded by other funding bodies will not be considered under the WDARF Grant. Similar version or part(s) of the research proposal shall not be submitted to other agencies for funding prior to the end of the current grant call process.

4.7 The Principal Investigator is to get feedback on proposal from one internal and one external colleague on improving research design. Inputs from industry colleagues will also be welcomed, in order to ensure industry relevance.

Host Institutions

4.8 All Host Institutions have the following responsibilities:

a. Support the grant application and review the application to ensure complete and quality submission;

b. Provide and/or procure the basic facilities needed to carry out the research as detailed in the proposal. This could include providing the resources and infrastructure to effectively carry out operational processes for the administration of grant such as procurement of services, management of funds, asset inventories, collation of project reports, hosting of foreign researchers, etc.

c. Monitor the progress of the research towards achievement of the milestones and deliverables stated in the proposal. Notify IAL of any deviations to the research or anticipated problem which may materially affect the progress of the proposed research.

d. Manage the use of the grant for indirect cost in accordance with the Guidelines. The Institution shall procure that the Investigators refer to the Institution for the policy of managing such use

4.9 By endorsing the grant application(s), the Host Institution is confident that the proposed research team has the necessary competencies and track record to bring about the successful completion of the proposed project.

4.10 For each awarded research project, the Host institutions would be required to enter into a grant agreement/contract with SSG for the duration of the research project.

Research Team

4.11 The Principal Investigator must fulfil the following requirements at the point of application:

a. Holds a primary full-time appointment (defined as a minimum commitment of at least 9 months per year) or an affiliation with an institution (may be local or foreign);

b. Holds an EdD or PhD qualification;

c. Has at least five (5) years of research experience, and has assumed the responsibility of a Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator for at least one (1) research project;

d. Has managed project grants of the magnitude requested in the application; and

e. Has a track record of leadership ability in leading research projects and providing mentorship to research team, as well as having productive research outcomes.

4.12 The research team may comprise international researchers but must include at least one Singaporean or Singapore Permanent Resident within the team. The researchers or research partnerships would be expected to have a mix of skills including:

a. A strong understanding and appreciation of the broad policy context in the area of skills and workforce development and lifelong learning, and its linkages to the SkillsFuture programmes and policies;

b. Research and analytical expertise in one or more social, economic or behavioural science disciplines, and the use of multi-disciplinary approaches where appropriate.

5. Research Timeframe

5.1 Project duration shall be capped at 24 months and adhere to the approved timeline committed in the proposal.

5.2 Projects longer than 24 months may be funded on a case-by-case basis and are subject to approval.

5.3 Projects shall commence in the month indicated in the project proposal or at any new time agreed between SSG and the Grantee. SSG will review deviations on a case-by-case basis and reserves the right to disqualify or reject projects that are unable to meet this requirement.

6. Funding Support

6.1 Research projects must be costed appropriately and reasonably according to the methodology proposed and overall size of the project. Applicant shall exercise due diligence to ensure that the budget is value for money. Upon in-principle approval of the research proposal, the research team and SSG will embark on a meeting to assess and phase the budget before finalising the budget to be supported.

6.2 The fundable components are:

6.2.1 <u>Research Manpower</u>

a. Manpower expenses for personnel engaged for the research project, and can include personnel to conduct research, research management and research administration. Supported costs include the full remuneration package per Host Institution's Human Resource policy and shall be pro-rated based on the personnel's direct involvement in the project.

b. Funding of research staff under the WDARF must comply with the prevailing and consistently applied Human Resource guidelines of the employing Host Institution.

c. The salary cost of Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator and Collaborator are not funded if they are employed by the Host Institutions. However, if these resources are from partner institutions and there are direct costs to the Host Institutions to engage and collaborate with them, the relevant costs are funded.

6.2.2 <u>Other Operating Expenses</u>

a. Survey administration and logistics costs (e.g. data collection related costs, printing of survey forms, incentives to garner responses);

b. Purchase of survey or administrative datasets;

c. Printing of research reports and materials;

d. Engagement fee of experts such as consultants

e. Travel and Accommodation (e.g. travel cost for experts)

Refer to Annex A on the list of fundable / non-fundable components. The list of fundable / non-fundable components is not exhaustive. For clarifications on fundable / non-fundable items, please contact research@ial.edu.sg.

6.3   All items claimed must comply with the Host Institution's internal procurement process, guidelines and policies.

6.4   Indirect costs in research are those costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified readily and specifically with a particular sponsored project, but contribute to the ability of the Host Institution to support research projects, such as providing research space and administering the activities. SSG will support indirect research costs (IRC) at a flat rate of **30%** of the total qualifying direct costs of each approved project. Principal Investigator will need to budget for the IRC within the overall project cost. SSG reserves the right to adjust this rate.

7.   Evaluation Criteria

7.1   Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Key Criteria	Sub-Categories	Description of Sub-Categories
(a) Relevance	(i) Clarity of research problem	Research problem is clearly stated, and research questions are relevant to the problem defined.
	(ii) Relevance to research themes	Research question(s) addresses the WDARF Broad Research themes, lines of inquiry and challenge statements.
	(iii) Policy and practice relevance	Addresses clear priority area(s) of policy / practice interest to SSG in Singapore's context.
(b) Impact	(i) Potential for policy and practice applications	Has strong potential for application to (e.g. enhancement / formulation of) policy and practice in the area of skills development and adult learning in and possibly beyond Singapore. Has articulated the pathways to impact and

Key Criteria	Sub-Categories	Description of Sub-Categories
		plans for involving and disseminating research insights to potential users, including those outside the academic community.
	(ii) Contribution to scholarly research	Makes a notable contribution to current understandings in skills development and adult learning, in addition to offering avenues for impactful application.
(c) Technical Merits	(i) Relevance of conceptual/ theoretical framework to research problem	There is a logical relationship between the problem and the conceptual/ theoretical framework (supported by adequate review of literature).
	(ii) Conceptual/ theoretical framework is supported by adequate review of research literature	
	(iii) Clarity of research methods	The methodological approach is appropriate to address the research questions/objectives and is clear and adequate in terms of design, and analytical framework.
	(iv) Adequacy of research methods	
(d) Project Team and Execution	(i) Track record of investigators	Resource is adequate to meet the timeline and researchers have the relevant expertise.
	(ii) Reasonable manpower support.	
	(iii) Realistic Timeline	Reasonable and achievable from the research standpoint.
	(iv) Realistic Budget	The budget is itemized with realistic estimates and is value for money.

7.2 The proposals will be evaluated by an expert review panel appointed by SSG. The panel may be informed and supplemented by peer reviews by experts in the specific fields, to make informed evaluation.

7.3 The proposals and inputs from the expert review panel, as well as inputs from potential users of the research, will be submitted to SSG Research Committee for selection and approval.

7.4 Principal Investigators will be notified of the results through their Office of Research. The SSG Research Committee reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted without being obliged to give any reason thereof. Appeals will not be entertained.

8. Intellectual Property Management

8.1 The ownership of the Intellectual Property (IP) created as a result of the research funded by WDARF is subjected to the prevailing Intellectual Property policies and guidelines of the Host Institution.

8.2 The Host Institution shall pay all costs and legal fees in connection with IP registration and management, where applicable.

8.3 The Host Institution to grant to the Singapore Government and public sector agencies, free of any additional charge, a worldwide, perpetual, irrevocable and non-exclusive licence to use, modify, adapt, publish and reproduce for any purpose whatsoever all IP created from the WDARF for non-commercial, R&D and/or educational purposes.

8.4 The Singapore Government and public sector agencies shall be entitled to grant its contractors sublicenses out of any of its rights.

8.5 The Host Institution may publish at any symposia; national, regional, international professional meetings; or in any journals, dissertation, newspaper or otherwise. All publications shall acknowledge the funding support by SSG by citing the Grant name 'SkillsFuture Singapore's Workforce Development

Applied Research Fund' and SSG's official grant number for the project. It is the Principal Investigator's and Host Institution's responsibility to ensure that the protection of any IP is not compromised as a result of the research publication of the research project.

8.6   Except for articles or papers published in scientific, technical or professional journals, the following disclaimer must be included in all publications arising from the funded research: 'Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SkillsFuture Singapore or the Singapore Government."

8.7   All publications and any other outputs arising from this grant shall be made known to SSG and a copy be made available to SSG upon request.

9.   Data Sharing Policy

9.1   All data generated from the Research shall be anonymised and aggregated as outlined in the plan to be outlined by the Institution pursuant to 9.2. Such data will be made available to user communities which includes other researchers, analysts and policy makers at the earliest feasible opportunity, but in any case, shall be no later than twelve (12) months after the end of the Term, the termination date of the Grant Agreement (if earlier terminated) or official date of publication, whichever is earlier.

9.2   The Institution shall outline and adopt a plan (which shall be aligned with the Institute's data management policy) to manage data obtained in the course of the Research, and such plan shall address the following:

9.2.1   the anonymisation of all data so obtained;

9.2.2 the submission of final datasets of the anonymised data to SSG for the purposes set out in 9.3;

9.2.3 the management of requests from user communities for the aggregated and anonymised data and ensuring that such requests are adequately met within a reasonable time.

9.3 Each of the Grantor and the Appointee may do any one or more of the following:

9.3.1 Use the data for analysis and published derived statistics;

9.3.2 Use data for research purposes;

9.3.3 Share data with its research collaborators or parties commissioned by the Grantor;

9.3.4 Acknowledge the data source if data is used; and

9.3.5 Use the data for any other purpose that is not prohibited by applicable law (as long as such use is in compliance with applicable law).

9.4 To enable the Grantor and the Appointee to take any of the actions stated in 9.3, the Institution shall ensure that it obtains all consents necessary under law, such consents to be in express written form.

10. Research Ethics Policy

10.1 The Host Institution is responsible for establishing a research ethics policy and enforcing its compliance. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigators, their Ethics Review Committee (or Institutional Review Board), and the Host Institutions to protect the rights of study subjects and the confidentiality of data,

and in compliance with the applicable legislation such as the Personal Data Protection Act.

10.2 There shall be an informed consent process. It shall include, where appropriate, information letter on the research project, and consent form to seek permission on sharing of data for wider or future research use to maximise the value of the data, while providing adequate safeguards for the individual, and allowing participants to withdraw from the research at any point should they wish.

10.3 A copy of the ethics approval to be lodged with SSG before commencement of data collection.

10.4 If there is no ethics review committee set up at the Host Institution, the Principal Investigator can submit the ethics application to IAL's Ethics Committee for ethics clearance.

11. Disbursement of Funds

11.1 Only items that are supported for funding will be funded by WDARF. The items that are supported for funding are presented in section 6.

11.2 WDARF Grant is provided on a reimbursement basis. Host institution shall pay for the incurred expenditure for the project first, and subsequently claim for reimbursement from SSG.

11.3 Host Institutions shall use WDARF's prescribed grant request form to claim for reimbursement. The claims submitted by the Host Institution must be supported by originals or certified true copies of receipts, payment vouchers or invoices by the Chief Finance Officer /Director and External Auditors of the Host Institution.

11.4 Claims may be submitted on a half-yearly basis (at the beginning of January and July) for expenses incurred for the past six (6) months, on the prescribed form together with supporting payment documents.

11.5 As and when directed by SSG, Host Institution will allow an auditor appointed by SSG to carry out an audit of its financial and related processes/procedures pertaining to the utilisation of the grant.

12. Performance Management

12.1 <u>Progress report</u>

   a. Principal Investigators are to submit soft copies of the half-yearly progress reports for each project via their respective Office of Research (or equivalent) per the schedule stated in the contract. The progress report shall also include any changes to the projected cashflow and project schedule.

   b. These reports may be reviewed by an appointed panel or WDARF Secretariat to assess the progress of the project, and the Principal Investigators may be invited to make a presentation of their research progress / findings to SSG's appointed panel or WDARF Secretariat. Principal Investigators may be required to give additional information about the progress of their project if the information submitted is deemed inadequate.

   c. Principal Investigators who fail to submit their progress report may be denied any grant disbursement until such progress report is submitted.

   d. A template of the progress report will be provided after awarding the research proposals.

12.2 <u>Final report</u>

 a. Principal Investigator is to submit soft copies of the final report within one (1) month from the project completion date (the writing of the final report shall be within the approved project timeline).

 b. Final reports will undergo a review by peers and will be approved for closure by the SSG Research Committee.

 c. Principal Investigator may be invited to make a presentation on the completed project to SSG / SSG appointed panel to ensure that the project has been completed satisfactorily, and that potential users of the research have been involved in the research.

 d. It is recommended for Principal Investigator to also share soft copies of the publications and conference papers produced as part of the research project.

12.3 <u>Yearly Audit Report</u>

 a. Principal Investigator may be asked to submit a Yearly Audit Report of the proceeding financial year.

 b. The Yearly Audit Report must be prepared by the Host Institution's internal or external auditors and certified by the Director of Research or equivalent.

 c. The Yearly Audit Report shall confirm that the Host Institution's requisitions are made in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of a Competitive Grant, and Guidelines.

12.4   Assessment of research impact

    a.   Principal Investigator is to provide an assessment of the research impact (as outlined in section 6b of the WDARF application form A2) 6 months after acceptance of the final report. This assessment should include a description of how the research outcomes have been communicated to interested parties, including potential users that were identified in the research proposal, as well as address comments from SSG arising from the final report, if any. If necessary, PI may be required to incorporate inputs from relevant stakeholders before submission of research impact report.

13. Grant Variation

13.1   Principal Investigators should submit all grant variations through the Host Institution's Office of Research (ORE), using the appropriate forms:

S/N	Type of Variation	Form
1	Amendments to Project	Form A5
2	Fund Virements	 A5_WDARF Project Variation Form.docx

13.2   Principal Investigators should refer to "Guidance for Processing Variation Requests" (Annex B) in their preparation of the variation requests to ensure that all supporting documents have been duly completed.

13.3   OREs should evaluate the Principal Investigators' requests and make decisions on all requests that fall within the Host Institution's approving authority. For requests that require SSG's approval, OREs should first evaluate the requests based on the considerations, norms and checks listed in Annex B and make recommendations for SSG's consideration.

13.4 For all variation requests, SSG's decision is final and appeals will not be entertained. **Retrospective variation requests are not allowed.**

13.5 SSG reserves the right to reject any claims that have resulted from the project changes without prior approval from SSG (in specific circumstances as stated in Annex B).

13.6 Request for any variation should be made before the last three (3) months of the original end date of the project. Retrospective variation requests will not be allowed, unless there is compelling justification for submission of a late virement request.

14. Closure of Project Accounts

14.1 All projects are expected to be completed within the stipulated term as per the Grant Agreement.

14.2 Host Institutions and Principal Investigators are to close the research project account **within six (6) months** from the date of project completion. SSG will not reimburse any expenditure incurred after the project completion date. Claims for allowable expenses should be prorated based on the relevant project periods only, and be submitted within six (6) months following project completion. Upon payment of such expenses, Host Institutions and Principal Investigators are to close the research project account immediately.

14.3 Host Institution shall close the account for the WDARF Grant projects individually and return any unspent funds to SSG, if any, upon completion of the projects as and when it occurs.

14.4 Host Institution must ensure that Principal Investigators are not to issue any new purchase orders after the project completion date, including retrospective orders.

Final Statement of Account

14.5   The Host Institution is required to submit a Final Statement of Account **within six (6) months** following the end of the project.

15. Compliance of Administrative Guidelines

15.1   In the event of non-compliance of this administrative guideline, SSG reserves the right to:

a. withhold or withdraw the funding;

b. disqualify the Principal Investigators from subsequent WDARF competitive funding; and/or

c. take any action SSG deems appropriate.

16.   Financial Regulations on Expenditure and Payment

16.1   Host Institutions and Principal Investigators should not commit to any expenditure before receiving the funding approval by SSG.

16.2   Similarly, Host Institutions and Principal Investigators should not commit to any expenditure after the project end date, inclusive of any approved extension period.

16.3   Host Institutions and Principal Investigators are to follow Host Institutions' procurement procedures and guidelines to ensure that all purchases made using WDARF Grants provide value for money and processes are transparent.

16.4   Host Institutions are required to ensure that there are adequate internal financial controls and processes as well as adequate cost control measures to ensure that resources are utilised prudently and cost inefficiencies are minimised.

16.5   As and when directed by SSG, Host Institutions will allow an auditor appointed by SSG to carry out an audit of its financial and related processes/procedures pertaining to the utilisation of WDARF Grants.

17.   Miscellaneous

SSG reserves the right to revise the administrative guidelines. The Host Institutions will be informed accordingly.

Annex A - List of fundable / non-fundable components

The below list of fundable / non-fundable components is not exhaustive. For items not listed within, please contact research@ial.edu.sg for clarification before incurring expenses.

Type of Expenses	Supportable?	Description
Research Manpower		
Principal Investigator (PI), Co-Principal Investigator and Collaborators	**Not supportable** if they are already employed by the Host Institution. **Supportable** if they are from partner institutions, and there are direct costs to the Host Institution to engage / collaborate with them. The funding for these resources needs to be specifically justified and provided for in the grant application and approved by SSG.	
Salary cost of research fellows, research associates, research assistants, admin and other staff.	Yes, but only if deemed necessary to the project, specifically justified and provided for in the grant application, and approved by SSG.	Includes salaries, CPF contributions and fringe benefits including medical, dental, contribution to welfare fund, bonuses, annual leave, staff insurance, etc. Allowed as part of overall compensation to employees provided such costs are incurred under formal established and consistently applied policies of the host institution. The salaries offered to staff shall be reasonable, in line with local market benchmarks and comply

Type of Expenses	Supportable?	Description
		with formal established pay scale of the host institution that is consistently applied regardless of the source of funds. It excludes pre-employment medical check-up, application of employment pass, visa as well as any levy (e.g. foreign workers levy) imposed by the government.
Student Assistants / Interns	Yes	Only full-time students who are residents of Singapore and are enrolled in local institutes of higher learning qualify to be supported as a student assistant/intern. Not allowable for students who are recipients of existing awards (or stipends) or students who are not residents of Singapore.
Experts' honorarium	Yes, but only if deemed necessary to the project, specifically justified and provided for in the grant application and approved by SSG.	Only if specifically provided for in the grant proposal and approved by SSG. The Expert must be identified and his/her contribution to the project must be clearly defined and described in the proposal. The Principal Investigator shall verify that the remuneration rates comply with the Host Institution's standard rates. The budget to be supported will be decided based on the above considerations.
Overtime	No	
Staff relocation cost	No	
Staff recruitment and related cost	No	Examples of such costs are advertisement and recruitment agency cost.
Other Operating Expenses		
Airfare, accommodation, per diem and local travel expenses	Yes, but should be judicious and only if deemed necessary to the project, specifically justified and provided for in the grant	Provided such costs are incurred under formal established and consistently applied policies of the Host Institution. It includes experts coming to Singapore to advise or Principal Investigator, Co- Principal

Type of Expenses	Supportable?	Description
	application and approved by SSG. Include justification of the need to travel, including why no other modes like conference call or online discussion is suitable.	Investigator travelling to consult the experts.
Audit fees	No	This includes both internal and external audit fees.
Books and specialised journals relevant to the research	No	
Computer & AV Accessories	Yes	PI to consider utilizing equipment from host institution or rental options, if feasible.
Conference	No	
Consultancy	Yes	Engagement fee of experts such as consultants.
Developmental Tools	No, unless deemed necessary and pro-rated to the project, specifically justified and provided for in the grant application and approved by SSG.	This includes expenses (services and/or equipment) to conduct experiments or develop tools as required within the scope of the research project. For example video production, printing of research collaterals and so on.
Entertainment & refreshment	No	
Fines and penalties	No	
Goods and Services Tax (GST)	Yes	Allowed for expenses incurred for the project.
Insurance premiums	No	The Host Institution is responsible for the insurance of the equipment, relevant workmen compensation and professional indemnity insurance which are in line with the Host Institution's risk policies.
Legal fees	No	
Local & overseas conferences	No	

Type of Expenses	Supportable?	Description
Overhead expenses - rental, utilities, telephone charges, facilities management, etc	No	
Patent application, IP related and commercialisation expenses	No	This includes patent application filing, maintenance and other related cost. Such cost shall be paid by the Host Institution.
Professional Membership Fee	No	
Professional Fees (including fees to consultants)	No, unless deemed necessary and pro-rated to the project, specifically justified and provided for in the grant application and approved by SSG.	The proposal must show how the required professional service contribute to the research and why the work cannot be performed by the research team. To include credential of the service provider(s) and fee breakdown.
Printing of final reports and other deliverables as stipulated in the proposal	Yes	For submission to SSG only.
Publication Fee	No	This includes submission fee to subscription and open access journals.
Staff retreat	No	
Survey-related expenses	Yes	This include: • Cost related to survey administration and logistics • Purchase of survey or administration database • Incentives to garner responses (in accordance to Host Institutions policy and practices) • Refreshments for focus group sessions.
Training	No	
Transportation, postage & courier services	Yes	Only for expenses directly related to the project. This includes postage, courier and freight charges for bringing in equipment and specialised research

Type of Expenses	Supportable?	Description
		consumables and reimbursement for staff transportation.
Working tools such as IT equipment and software	No, unless deemed necessary and pro-rated to the project, specifically justified and provided for in the grant application and approved by SSG.	Equipment shall be on rental or subscription basis, unless it can be justified that it is more cost effective to purchase the item(s). Purchase of IT equipment must be in accordance with the IT policy of the Host Institution regardless of source of funds.

Annex B - Guidance for Processing Variation Requests

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
1	Amendment to Project (General)					
	General considerations	Stage of project	There should not be any amendments three (3) months from the end of project.	Form A5 (Project variation form)	Form A5 is duly completed and endorsed. All supporting documents attached.	**All amendments must be approved by SSG.** (See exceptions at 1b, 1c).
				Latest statement of accounts	Fund availability	
		Need for amendments	Amendments should support the original objectives of the project only, not for support of "follow-on" research, changes to scope or research questions.	N.A.	The PI has no outstanding half-yearly/final progress reports and final research reports for any SSG grants. PIs with overdue reports are not allowed to submit variation requests.	
	Amendment to Project (Specific Requirement)					
1a)	Change of PI/Co-PI	Suitability of proposed PI/Co-PI	Ability of the new PI/Co-PI to contribute and achieve the	Form A5

Information on incoming and | Application should reach SSG three (3) months' in advance before PI/Co-PI | Request for a change in the PI/Co-PI must be made to SSG and be endorsed by the |

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
			intended objectives of the project.	outgoing PI/Co-PI: last day of work in Institution, name of Institution he will be joining, etc.	leaves (for contract expiry/termination cases) and as soon as practicable for resignation cases. ORE should consider working closely with HR and schools to ensure timeliness especially in submitting change of PI request.	ORE of the existing and/or new Host Institutions. The new PI/Co-PI must be a recognised expert in that area and possess the necessary expertise to continue with the research work.
		Cost implications	Must be within the approved Research Manpower budget.	CV, Letter of recommendation and credentials of incoming PI/Co-PI	ORE needs to determine whether the proposed PI /Co-PI is eligible based on WDARF Grant eligibility criteria and whether he/she is suitable and has the skills to continue and complete the research work. If in doubt, ORE could request for Letter of recommendation from	

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
					current employer of proposed PI/Co-PI.	
		SSG reserves the right to terminate the grant if: • No suitable replacement is found; • Proposed PI is rejected; or • New PI cannot achieve the necessary outcomes. • Impact on research outcomes and timeline		**Only applicable to Change of PI:** Mitigation Plan while waiting for new PI/Co-PI to come in: Research Office and new PI should jointly develop a mitigation plan to sustain/ resuscitate the project, including: • reassessing project milestones/KPIs • taking steps to ensure students' graduation is not disrupted • identifying and committing to put in all necessary	ORE needs to assess the feasibility of the mitigation plan	

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
				resources and time where relevant The plan should be signed off by both the dean of department and the current/new PI/Co-PI.		
1b)	Change of Collaborators /Experts (Removal/ Replacement / Addition)	Impact on research outcomes and timeline Relevance and contribution to project outcome	The need for the collaborators/experts must be driven by the project need and justified accordingly	Form A5 or equivalent documentation required by ORE	ORE has to ensure timeliness in submitting requests to Director of Research (DOR) for changes in collaborators/experts, such as removal or addition of collaborators/experts. ORE needs to assess the suitability of the collaborators/experts to the proposed role and contribution to the project.	Request involving the removal, replacement or addition of collaborators/experts within the approved budget for collaborators/experts shall be approved by DOR (or above). Written assessment supporting the request for change, including the assessment of impact to the project and justification for the appointment,

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
		Cost implications	Aligned to university's norms and based on the responsibility and deliverables and within the approved budget for collaborator/experts		ORE to assess the reasonableness of the requests, e.g. the job scope is commensurate with the duration, and assess if consultation, if required, can be done via email/ video conferencing.	should be provided to SSG at least 2 weeks before the change is affected.\n\nFor requests that exceeds the approved budget for fees paid to Collaborators/Experts (i.e. Experts Honorarium), SSG's approval will be sought on fund virement (refer to item 2b). No request to increased budget is allowed.
1c)	Change of Research Fellows/ Research Associates/ Research Assistants/	Impact on research outcomes and timeline\n\nRelevance and contribution to project outcome	The need for changes in the approved number of the project team members (due to removal or addition of research assistants/researc	For changes in number or/and name of research assistants/research associates/student assistants, no variation is needed	ORE has to ensure the changes in number or/and name of research assistants/research associates/student assistants do not require fund virement.	Host Institution to inform IAL of any changes in number or/and name of research assistants/ research associates/ student assistants for record purposes.

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
	Student Assistants/ Other Staff (Removal/ Replacement /Addition)		h associates/student assistants) must be driven by the project need and justified accordingly.	if there is no need for fund virement.	If fund virement is required, please refer to Para 2.	
1d)	Project Extension	Impact on deliverables and usefulness of final research outcome in view of the delay	To ensure currency of research, extension will be capped at 6 months	Form A5

Evidence of satisfactory progress (e.g. copies of publication arising from the research, abstracts of conferences attended etc.) | ORE needs to assess if it is realistic for the project to achieve closure with the requested extension. Request for extension will not be supported merely due to manpower constraints. | SSG may consider a one-time extension of up to six (6) months with no-cost involvement if the PI is able to demonstrate ability to deliver on the other remaining milestones and furnish strong |

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
		Cost implications	Must be within the approved budget.	Justification for the delay(s) encountered and why the mitigating measures taken did not achieve their intended objectives

Revised Project Implementation Schedule (Gantt Chart) | Request for grant extension must reach SSG at least six (6) months before end date of project.

The PI must ensure sufficient funds in each vote to support the extension request. Any virement requests necessary to meet the extension period must be made known as part of the extension request. | justifications for the extension.

An extension beyond six (6) months may be considered on a case by case basis. No additional funds would be given for any extensions. |
| 1e) | Change of scope | Change of scope is not allowed as this will amount to a new research project which would have to be separately evaluated by the expert review panel and approval is required by the research committee on its own merits. | | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. |
| 1f) | Change of research design and | That it increases the usefulness of the final | Must be within the approved budget. | Form A5 | Review and support the request. Form A5 is duly completed and | Request for a change in research design and research |

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
	research methodology	research outcomes but that does not affect the approved scope and research questions.		Details and rationale of the change(s) and how it increases the usefulness of final research outcomes should be included.	endorsed. All supporting documents attached.	methodology must be made to SSG for approval and be endorsed by the ORE.
1g)	Termination/ Lapse of Project	Alternative options to termination	Other options should be explored to ensure that the best outcome is achieved with the investment already made. Justification why these options are not feasible and termination is the only option.	Form A5 Department report: Department should prepare a report that includes: • A review of what went wrong for the project • What are the alternatives to terminations and why they are not applicable in this case • Preventive measures to	ORE to assess the adequacy of the winding-down plan and the Department report.	SSG (Per the termination clause in the grant agreement)
		Automatic Termination	If the original PI has become unavailable (e.g. resignation, passing), Host Institution should propose a replacement PI. If			

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
			the replacement PI is not acceptable to SSG, the project is automatically terminated.	avoid future occurrence. The report should be signed off by both the dean of department and the DOR.		
		Orderly conclusion of project	Project accounts should be frozen immediately once termination proceedings are initiated. A separate winding-down budget should be drawn up for SSG's consideration. This covers expenses necessary to effect an orderly conclusion, for a period not exceeding three (3) months from the date of termination.			
2	Fund Virement (General)					

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
	General considerations	The critical role of the proposed items to project outcomes and the reason they were not budgeted in original proposal	Fund virement is to support the project only, not to support any "follow-on" research.	Form A5	Form A5 is duly completed and endorsed. All supporting documents are attached. Check is done on whether requested item was in the approved budget and whether requested item is within WDARF Grant fundable list, as well as value for money considerations.	Fund virement SSG delegates the approval authority for the virement of funds between approved votes to the Host Institution, subject to a cumulative amount not exceeding 10% of the original total project direct cost value (excluding IRC). SSG is to be notified, through Secretariat, of all virement made between and within approved votes in the progress report.
		Cost-savings principle	It is possible for PI to use cost-savings within approved project cost to purchase essential new items not previously budgeted. However, purchase must be based on needs;	Latest statement of accounts	Fund availability	
				Relevant quotations	Justification of need for the purchase. Reasonableness of quotes by cross-referencing similar	For virement between approved votes which is cumulatively above 10%, the approval authority remains as SSG.

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S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
			availability of savings is not a reason for new purchase.		purchase or independent checks and comply with the prevailing procurement rules of the Host Institution. Whether proposed purchase items are already available in Host Institution, or can be more cost-effectively leased.	Inter-institutional virement requires SSG's approval and acknowledgement from the DOR (or equivalent) for all institutions involved.
		Stage of project	Compelling justifications to be provided for virement requests if project is ending in a year or less. Virement would not be approved if project is ending in three (3) months or less, unless in exceptional cases.	N.A.	The PI has no outstanding half-yearly/final progress reports and final research reports for any SSG grants. (PIs with overdue reports are not allowed to submit variation requests.) Justification for virement.	
Fund Virement (Specific Requirement)						

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
2a)	Overseas travel	Only for PIs, Co-PIs and Experts	Follows the travel policies and guidelines of Host Institution	Form A5	ORE has to ensure the institution's travel policies and guidelines are adhered to in PI's amendments to the travel budget during Budget Phasing. Justification for need to travel and why no other modes like conference call is suitable.	**Virement of funds into the Overseas Travel sub-vote is not allowed.** **Overspending will not be reimbursed.**
2b)	Collaborator and Expert (Beyond the approved budget for engagement of collaborator(s) and Expert(s))	Relevance and contribution to project outcomes	The need for a Collaborator/Expert must be driven by project needs (e.g. not because Host Institution requires Collaborator/Expert to give public lecture or other activities.) Why the need was not identified at	Form A5 Curriculum Vitae of prospective candidate	ORE needs to assess the role, credentials and expertise of the Collaborator/Experts. If in doubt, to request an independent assessment from the dean of department. Justification for need to travel and why no other modes like	Approval by SSG

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
			stage of proposal submission or before entering the agreement.		conference call is suitable.	
		Track record	N.A.	Form A5 Job scope/deliverables of Expert	ORE needs to assess reasonableness of request, e.g. the job scope is commensurate with the duration requested. Particularly, ORE needs to assess if the consultation can be done via email/tele-video conferencing, rather than through appointment of Expert.	
		Duration of stay	The job scope and deliverables of Collaborator/Expert must be clear for assessment of the duration required of his/her service			
		Fees/Honorarium	Fees/Honorarium for Collaborator/Expert must be aligned with Host Institution's applied policies and guidelines			
2c)	Change of Research Assistants/ Research Associates/	Impact on research outcomes and timeline	The need for changes in the approved number of the project team members (due to	Form A5	Form A5 is duly completed and endorsed. All supporting documents are	Fund virement SSG delegates the approval authority for the virement of funds between approved

S/N	Type of Request	Key Considerations	Norms	Supporting Documents Required	Types of checks by ORE	Approval Authority
	Student Assistants (Removal/ Replacement /Addition)	Relevance and contribution to project outcome	removal or addition of research assistants/research associates/student assistants) must be driven by the project need and justified accordingly.		attached. Check is done on whether requested item was in the approved budget and whether requested item is within WDARF Grant fundable list, as well as value for money considerations.	votes to the Host Institution, subject to a cumulative amount not exceeding 10% of the original total project direct cost value (excluding IRC). SSG is to be notified, through Secretariat, of all virement made between and within approved votes, in the progress report. For virement between approved votes which is cumulatively above 10%, the approval authority remains as SSG. Inter-institutional virement requires SSG's approval and acknowledgement from the DOR (or equivalent) for all institutions involved.