

BA/CSSP RG Program

Background

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA) is becoming a vibrant center of scientific and intellectual debate. At present, the BA is looking to revive its past historical scientific mission so it can be recognized again by scientists all over the world as one of the best global linkage venues to eminent researchers and scientific institutions.

The Center for Special Studies and Programs (CSSP) of the BA aims to help researchers and scientists get the best support needed to advance their work through international collaboration.

Unfortunately, Egyptian professionals and scholars such as PhD holders, who obtained their degrees abroad, face one of three options that ultimately lead to brain drain:

First, they can remain in the foreign country where they studied and pursue their professional and academic careers, provided they can secure funding for their research;

Second, they can return to their original Egyptian institutions where research funds are scarce and hence risk the loss of the knowledge they acquired;

Third, they might pursue a commercial career in Egypt while using their acquired knowledge professionally and in this case, development is solely dependent on their own financing or provided by multinational corporations where they could end up working.

Objective

To support outstanding young postdoctoral Egyptian researchers who perform cutting edge research and undertake collaborative investigation approaches across the science and technology spectrum by offering them postdoctoral research grants as well as help them establish connections with Egyptian and international scientists as well as researchers abroad.

Program Description

The Research Grants Program started in the year 2004. The grants cover research in all fields of sciences, natural sciences, engineering sciences, mathematics and information technology, as well as social sciences and humanities.

The BA research grants offer Egyptian scientists the opportunity to advance their career in their own institutions. In addition, the CSSP organizes a number of workshops and lectures each year covering an array of career development skills, with special focus on scientific research and development. With special concern to post-doctoral scientists, CSSP recognized the hurdles they face in translating their scientific research into doable commercial ventures hence organized series of lectures and workshops that help them acquire this.

The BA/CSSP Research Grants program is responsible for:

- Supporting young Egyptian postdoctoral researchers by offering them postdoctoral research grants.
- Helping young Egyptian postdoctoral researchers to establish connections with Egyptian and international scientists as well as researchers in their fields.
- Coordination of several other research related events.

Even though Egypt claims to encourage scientific research and development and include it in its national yearly expenditure plans, studies have shown that very little is spent in this field hence leads to poor R&D funding in Egypt.

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA) in Egypt is committed to catalyzing the progress of science and technology in the region, and through its Center for Special Studies and Programs (CSSP), it has launched a research grant program to fund outstanding young postdoctoral scientists in Egypt, who undertake collaborative projects across the science and technology spectrum.

The establishment of productive, mutually beneficial relationships between Egyptian and foreign science and technology communities is very important. This is intended to encourage the use and development of complementary experience and skills between the Egyptian researcher and the foreign researcher. As junior researchers become involved in collaborative research projects, we guarantee the emergence of generations of outstanding scientists, thus contributing to the wealth of the nation.

Professionals and scholars such as Ph.D. holders, who obtained their degrees abroad, face one of three options that ultimately lead to brain drain:

- They can remain in the foreign country and continue their pursuit of their professional and academic careers, provided they can secure funding for their research.
- They can return to their original Egyptian institutions where research funds are scarce and hence risk the loss of the knowledge they acquired.
- They might pursue a commercial career in Egypt while using their acquired knowledge professionally and in this case, development is solely dependent on their own financing or provided by multinational corporations where they could end up working.

The Research Grants program initiated by the CSSP, seeks out the generation of creative and innovative research. CSSP recognizes the existence of a pool of untapped potentials available in young researchers all over Egypt eager to collaborate with international institutions, however lack the process needed for such collaboration.

Announcement

The announcement for the grants is mentioned in Egyptian newspaper, and in various Egyptian faculties and Universities besides the website of the CSSP (see <http://www.bibalex.org/cssp>).

Eligibility

Young Egyptian postdoctoral researchers should meet all the following criteria:

- not exceeding 35 years by end of the application year.
- having completed his/her Ph.D. within the past five years or are expecting to obtain the degree by end of the application year.
- conducting research in one of the following research areas:
 - Agricultural Sciences
 - Biology and Biotechnology
 - Chemistry and Biochemistry
 - Earth Sciences
 - Engineering Sciences and Technologies
 - Information Technology and Bioinformatics
 - Mathematics
 - Medical Sciences
 - Physics and Biophysics
 - Pre-University Education
- performing cutting edge research and collaborative investigation approaches across the science and technology spectrum.
- working currently at a public/private academic or research institution in Egypt and research must be conducted in Egypt.
- being currently engaged or having the capability to arrange work on a joint research project with foreign counterpart(s) at a university or a research center abroad.

The BA/CSSP offers them postdoctoral research grants, helps them to establish connections with Egyptian and international scientists as well as researchers in their fields.

Applying

The whole application procedure for the BA/CSSP Research Grants is electronic and takes place online.

Reviewing

A blind review process is being used to evaluate each proposal. Therefore, no reference is made to the person, institution, or specific location that would identify the researcher in the documents submitted for reviewing.

Final selections are made by an international reviewers committee with the BA Director chairing the committee. Selection is based on the project's objective, its clarity and originality, as well as the project design and budget.

Winners are selected by an international reviewing committee comprised of eminent scientists from all-over the world.

We utilize the World Wide Web for the entire review process. Consequently, all proposals for review are viewed and downloaded via the Web, and review results are also submitted online.

Follow up

The researchers have a webpage for submitting the progress reports and providing periodical information about their projects.