



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**

Office of
Research



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Research Stimulus Fund for Policy Engagement and Impact American University of Beirut Submission Guidelines

Objective

The Research Stimulus Fund for Policy Engagement and Impact is a collaborative initiative between the AUB Office of Research and the Government Engagement Platform (GEP) and aims to incentivize AUB faculty to conduct policy-relevant research aligned with priority needs identified by governmental entities and ministries in Lebanon, in addition to the scope of collaboration between AUB and governmental entities.

The initiative is expected to increase the volume and quality of policy-oriented research produced by AUB faculty, strengthen structured collaboration between academia and government, and improve the relevance of academic outputs to national priorities. Over time, it will contribute to enhancing evidence-informed policymaking in Lebanon, reinforcing AUB's role as a key knowledge partner in governance and policy reform, and fostering a culture of applied research with measurable societal impact.

In preparation for the full application, interested applicants are invited to attend a webinar with various governmental representatives to discuss their priorities. During this webinar, faculty members will have the chance to dive deeper into topics of interest and explore the thematic priorities.

General Guidelines

Topics of particular interest:

This call is open to research aligned with thematic priorities co-defined with governmental entities and ministries in Lebanon. Interdisciplinary collaborations are highly encouraged.

Funding and Duration:

The Stimulus Fund will provide up to \$20,000 per grant, for a period of one year. Awards may be lower than requested based on expenditure eligibility or timeline.

Proposals should not have major overlap with previously funded projects and should not be submitted at the same time to other internal funding programs at AUB, for example, Farouk Jabre Interfaculty Grants, Munib and Angela Masri Institute Grants, URB Grants, and MPP Grants.

Lead Principal Investigators (Lead-PIs) and Co-PIs:

Full-time AUB faculty members are eligible to apply as Lead-PI. Co-PIs may include other AUB faculty members and, where relevant, representatives from partnering governmental entities or ministries. At least the Lead-PI should be of professional rank. Visiting faculty members can participate only as Co-PIs.

The Lead-PI will be responsible for the management and execution of the project in line with the submitted proposal. A faculty member may serve as Lead-PI for only one submitted grant. All Lead-PIs and Co-PIs are expected to make a notable contribution to the project and should contribute to the



proposal development. All Lead-PIs and Co-PIs are responsible for adhering to AUB guidelines and policies pertaining to research conduct.

Capacity-Building Requirement:

Awardees are required to participate in a structured capacity-building program, provided through the GEP, covering policy-relevant research methodologies, knowledge translation (including policy brief development and policy dialogue), and interest-holder engagement. The program is intended to strengthen policy relevance, practical applicability, and potential impact of funded research by equipping researchers with the skills needed to engage effectively with policymakers and other end users of evidence. GEP will develop a toolbox to support academics in engaging governmental entities.

Reporting and External Grant Submission:

Grant recipients are required to submit a mid-period progress report, summarizing key progress, challenges and any preliminary findings. In addition, there will be an event where all teams will present their projects' work, progress and outcomes. The recipients are also required to submit a final report summarizing the final findings and deliverables, which may include peer-reviewed publications, policy briefs for decision-makers, and structured policy dialogues with relevant stakeholders.

Budget Categories and Restrictions:

All expenditures must follow University stated policies and procedures, e.g., for personnel hiring, purchasing, etc.

Grants cannot be used for the following expenditures: registration fees for conferences, workshops, or training courses; buying computers, smartphones, and corresponding accessories; professional society membership fees; faculty member salaries.

The allowable expenditure items include the following:

- Personnel: Students, research assistants, casual labor, or field workers.
- Lab supplies and equipment: Total amount cannot exceed \$10,000 for lab supplies and equipment, including shipment expenses for foreign orders, as applicable.
- Testing services: Total amount cannot exceed \$5,000. For technical services at external labs, the Lead-PIs should present a well justified case and should make sure that the service is not available at the University.
- Software licenses: Total amount cannot exceed \$3,000. Lead-PIs should present a well justified case and should make sure that the software is not available at the University.
- Policy: Total amount cannot exceed \$4,000
 - Policy Dialogue: planning for the policy dialogue to include catering, AV, IT, ...
 - Policy Brief

All items purchased using Stimulus Fund grants remain the property of AUB.



No-Cost Extensions:

Requests for no-cost extension will not be considered.

Proposal Write-up Guidelines

The following is a list of sections that should be included in the research proposal, and the recommended length of each section. Overall, it is recommended that Sections 3 to 10 do not exceed 10 pages, based on a provided template.

1. Cover page including title, duration, and research team with affiliations (Lead-PIs and Co-PIs). The titles and roles of each investigator should be clearly described in the cover page too.
2. Abstract (up to 350 words): Briefly state the background, aims, significance of the project, methods.
3. Background (up to 1 page): Describe the background to the proposal, critically evaluating the existing state-of-the-art and specifically discuss the gaps in knowledge the project intends to fill.
4. Specific aims: Enumerate and describe concisely the specific research aims of the project.
5. Significance: State the importance and relevance of each proposed goal and highlight its novel aspects, as applicable.
6. Methods (up to 3 pages): Describe the research methodology that will be used to investigate each specific aim, with in-depth details.
7. Preliminary studies and results, as applicable (up to 1 page): Report any preliminary pertinent studies or information that can help in appraising the experience and competence of the investigators in relation to the proposed work.
8. Expected outcomes and impact (up to 1 page): Include an *itemized list* of all expected deliverables in terms of publications, intellectual property, outreach, partnerships, and knowledge translation, as applicable. Be as specific as possible as these will be used as indicators for evaluating the final outcomes from the project.
For policy impact and knowledge translation outputs: Describe the plans to engage governmental stakeholders and translate research findings into policy-relevant outputs including policy briefs, and structured policy dialogues. Identifying specific governmental entities or ministries to engage, and a timeline for knowledge translation activities, would be ideal.
9. Challenges and mitigation plan (1 page): Identify potential risks or obstacles that may affect the project and outline practical measures to anticipate, monitor, and address them to ensure successful implementation.
10. Roles: Include a description of the role of the Lead-PIs and Co-PIs, as applicable, towards the accomplishment of the proposed specific aims, in addition to the allocation of research tasks to personnel who will be paid from the project.
11. Timeline: Proposals should contain a schedule for the research activities and deliverables using one month time units.
12. Budget: Include an itemized budget in US dollars, with *clear justification* for each budget item in line with the budget categories and restrictions listed in the budget section. This should be detailed enough to allow judgment of appropriateness. The maximum allowed total budget should not exceed \$20,000.
13. References: Include the list of bibliographic references used in the proposal.



In addition to the above, please submit the curriculum vitae of the Lead-PIs and Co-PIs.

Proposal Submission Process

Faculty members are required to adhere to the following guidelines when submitting their grant applications:

- Proposals can only be submitted through the Online Grants Proposal Submission System [<https://grants.aub.edu.lb>]. Lead-PIs should click the “New” button in the top menu and choose the “Research Stimulus Fund for Policy Engagement and Impact” option to initiate the submission process. After the proposal is submitted, all required signatures will be collected electronically.
- If the proposal involves human subjects, the Lead-PI should declare so during submission and should follow guidelines for ethics approval (i.e., Institutional Review Board (IRB)) as soon as possible to ensure timely processing. If the proposal is funded, only personnel budget will be released until the needed ethical approvals is secured.
- If the proposed research involves experimental animals, the Lead-PIs should declare so during submission and should apply to the Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) [<http://www.aub.edu.lb/fm/medicalresearch/Pages/AnimalCareFacility.aspx>] for project approval preferably before submitting the proposal. If the proposal is funded, only personnel budget will be released until the needed IACUC approval is secured.
- If the proposed research involves the use of radioactive or biohazardous material, the Lead-PIs should declare so during submission and should apply to the Health Physics Services Unit [<https://www.aub.edu.lb/facilities/ehsrn/Pages/radiation.aspx>] for a license preferably before submitting the proposal. If the proposal is funded, only personnel budget will be released until the needed license is secured.

Proposal Review Process

Grants will be allocated on a competitive basis based on a formal review process with scoring that captures the following elements: significance, innovation, methodology, feasibility, alignment with government-identified priority needs, potential for policy impact, and scalability through extramural funding. The proposals will be evaluated by an independent selection committee. The selection committee’s decisions are final.

Grant Management

The Office of Research at AUB will be responsible for administering the awards. The grant officers will monitor the projects for administrative and financial compliance with the award conditions. The officers will also follow up on the research accounts to ensure timely use of the allocated funds.

Principles of AI Use in Proposals Preparation and Revision

- When applicable, the use of AI in the preparation of proposals must be clearly acknowledged.
- Uploading full proposals or proposal content to any AI platform is strictly prohibited for peer reviewing or identifying potential reviewers.
- To identify potential reviewers using AI tools, one may only upload limited, non-confidential information such as titles, and references.



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Timeline

Date	Activity
Tuesday, July 14th, 2026	Funding announcement
Thursday, July 23rd, 2026	Webinar with governmental representatives to discuss their priorities
Friday, September 18th, 2026	Proposal submission deadline
Wednesday, November 4th, 2026	Results announcement
Wednesday, November 11th, 2026	Projects start date