



# **The Basic Bylaws for Academic Research Excellence Prize at the Arab Open University**

**Adopted by AOU University Council**

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## **CONTENTS**

	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>Introduction</b> -----	<b>3</b>
<b>Article (1) Title</b> -----	<b>3</b>
<b>Article (2): Definitions</b> -----	<b>3</b>
<b>Article (3): Aims of the Prize</b> -----	<b>3</b>
<b>Article (4): Prize types</b> -----	<b>4</b>
<b>Article (5): Prize Areas</b> -----	<b>4</b>
<b>Article (6): Prize Components</b> -----	<b>4</b>
<b>Article (7): Nomination Conditions</b> -----	<b>5</b>
<b>Article (8): Declaring &amp; Awarding of Excellence Research Prizes</b> -----	<b>5</b>
 <b>Procedures</b>	
 <b>Article (9): Principles of Selection</b> -----	 <b>6</b>
<b>Article (10): General Provisions</b> -----	<b>6</b>

## **Introduction**

Academic Research is considered a measure of the development and advancement of civilization because of its impact on social development. Based on its important role in supporting the spirit of scientific cooperation and academic research in the Arab region in particular, the AOU has set up excellence prizes for scientific research in all its branches and on the wider university level in the aim of developing the specialised skills and capabilities of all researchers and academics in Arab countries, taking into consideration the latent research programmes on the local level for each country.

## **Article (1): Title**

The current bylaws shall bear the title of: “The Basic Bylaws for Academic Research Excellence Prize at the Arab Open University”.

## **Article (2): Definitions**

The following words and expressions shall have the meanings specified hereunder:

<b>University</b>	The Arab Open University (AOU)
<b>Branch</b>	An AOU branch
<b>Rector</b>	The Rector of a Branch in the country hosting it

## **Article (3): Aims of the Prize**

This prize aims to:

- Direct scientific research towards areas that meet the requirements of and the challenges facing the Arab community in general and those of the local communities in particular.
- Augment the culture of scientific research and link it to the learning outcomes of university education.
- Upgrading the research skills of AOU academic staff to international standards.
- Crystalizing the awareness in the AOU of the significance of academic research as a basic element reflecting the performance of all staff members, beside their teaching and community service duties.

#### **Article (4): Prize types**

The prize is assigned and presented annually to academic staff members in the area of scientific research as follows:

1. A prize for single scientific research excellence awarded by each AOU branch.
2. A prize for single scientific research excellence awarded on the whole University level.
3. A prize for joint scientific research excellence awarded by each AOU branch.
4. A prize for joint scientific research excellence awarded on the whole University level.

#### **Article (5): Prize Areas**

The AOU Research Department sorts out nominations into the following research areas:

1. Administrative, Social, Educational, and Teaching sciences.
2. Natural and Technological sciences.

#### **Article (6): Prize Components**

The prize consists of the following:

1. Certificate and shield naming the prize and the winner.
2. A reward estimated as follows:
  - A.** The prize for single scientific research excellence at each AOU branch:
    - A prize worth (\$1000)
    - covered by the respective branch's budget.
  - B.** The prize for single scientific research excellence on the whole University:
    - A prize worth (\$1000)
    - covered by HQ budget
3. **C.** The prize for joint scientific research excellence at each AOU branch:
  - A prize worth (\$1000) equally divided between winners
  - covered by the respective branch's budget

**4. D.** The prize for joint scientific research excellence awarded on the whole University level.

- A prize worth (\$1000) equally divided between winners
- covered by HQ budget

**Article (7): Nomination Conditions**

- Nominations are open to all Ph.D. holding staff members and researchers in the Arab Open University (Professors, Associate Professors & Assistant Professors) excluding persons occupying leading positions (University Presidents, Branch Rectors, Vice-Presidents, Deans and persons on an equal status.)
- The nominee ought to have been employed by AOU on a full-time basis for at least two years.
- A person already awarded the same prize 3 years back or more can be nominated again for it.
- The research project (or projects) presented for the prize should not have been completed earlier than 3 years before it is submitted for nomination.
- A research project (or projects) may be submitted again so long as its date of publication has not superseded the 3-year period mentioned in the previous item.

**Article (8): Declaring & Awarding of Excellence Research Prizes Procedures**

Excellence research prizes are declared and awarded as follows:

1. The Vice-President for Academic Affairs announces the start of application & nomination for the Academic Research Excellence Prize. Subsequently, the Rectors of all AOU branches inform all researchers among the staff and their peers of the application and nomination conditions/requirements.
2. Applicants send their applications to their Head of Department (Programme Coordinator). The application should contain the following documents:
  - The applicant's updated CV.
  - The full texts of the published research papers showing the date and place of publication.
  - Participation in academic conferences, their committee membership and/or chairing.
  - Supervision of masters or Ph.D. students' dissertations at AOU or outside it.
  - Any other supporting documents.
3. After the Programme Coordinator make sure that the application meets all the nomination conditions, he sends the application(s) to the respective Dean via the Branch Rector.

4. In case the applicant is the Programme Coordinator, the Branch Rector forms a committee of academic staff members to check the applicant's documents.
5. The respective Dean forms a committee chaired by himself/herself together with two staff members from the Deanship or a branch to study the application(s), and make the relevant recommendation of either award or withhold the prize. This ought to be written in a detailed objective report.
6. The AOU President forms a committee headed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and two members occupying high positions (Deans or persons of equal status) to study the application(s) and select the winner(s).
7. Quorum is met when the majority attend the meeting. Decisions are made when the majority of the members attending the meeting vote for a motion. Such decisions are not subject to appeal.
8. The committee formed by the Dean may determine to withhold the prize if it deems that the presented research paper(s) are not up to the required standard of excellence, or if their number is not adequate in the research areas shown in Article 5 of the current bylaws.

#### **Article (9): Principles of Selection**

- That the applicant ought to have published at least 3 single or joint research papers in the past 3 years.
- That at least one of these papers has been published in a refereed internationally-recognized periodical (according to the standards spelled out in AOU staff promotion bylaws).
- That the published research papers have an academic/scientific value reflected by reference to them by researchers in the same specialization.
- That the applicant had contributed to specialized local, regional and international conferences by having presented research papers, by membership of their committees or by chairing their meetings.
- That the applicant had clear contributions in matters of attracting financial support for research projects.
- That the research works are the outcome of contracts made with local, regional and international bodies aimed at solving problems in their area of specialization.
- That the research topic is connected with developing the AOU or enhancing Open Education (Blended learning) in general.

#### **Article (10): General Provisions**

- A. The current bylaws annul all previous bylaws named "Academic Research Excellence Prize in the Arab Open University."
- B. Rectors of AOU branches are responsible for implementing the decisions made according to the current bylaws.
- C. The University Council shall deal with matters not stipulated in these bylaws.