

Visiting Professorship Chairs (VPC's) - Expression of Interest (Eoi)

Deadline: Rolling Call

Introduction and Program Overview

The overall aim of the Visiting Professorship Chairs (VPC's) Program is to achieve identifiable growth in the research effort by bringing very high quality researchers into Abu Dhabi research ecosystem from international research institutes that have a reputation for excellence in research. The Visiting Professorship Chairs (VPC's) Program will:

- Foster and develop emerging areas of strategic opportunity, enhance mentoring leading to better quality human resources, build capacity, critical mass, scale and quality of research in strategic sectors
- Build international networks with top researchers and institutes from around the world by supporting leading international researchers and Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in Abu Dhabi
- Improve reputation of Abu Dhabi researchers and HEIs and help lead to a rise in global ranking

The Visiting Professorship Chairs (VPC's) Program is run as a rolling call:

Potential candidates wishing to apply to the program should contact an eligible Abu Dhabi's HEIs first. They may not apply directly for the VPC program.

An Expression of Interest (Eoi) nominating a candidate may be submitted by an eligible HEI at any time, stating their joint interest with the potential candidate.

Full Proposals will only be accepted by invitation from the VPC's program, following the submission and evaluation of Expressions of Interest (Eoi). Full proposals must be received within four months of receipt of the invitation from the VPC's Program.

It is intended that the funding from the VPC's Program is a contribution to the host institution towards the costs of receiving the Visiting Professor (VP). It is not intended to cover every expense

The VPC's program will consist of two categories of candidate:

- Scaling research effort with the involvement of early to mid-career **"Rising Star"** researchers. Under the VPs Program, up to five rising stars per annum will be awarded, where each will be funded AED 0.5M per year for 4 years. Total: AED 2M per rising star over four years.
- Building sustainable links with top research centers overseas by supporting **"Established Researchers"** from abroad in institutions in Abu Dhabi. Under the VPC's Program, up to five

established researchers per annum will be awarded, where each will be funded AED 1M per year for 3 years. Total: AED 3M per established researcher over three years.

Desirable Sector
Aerospace
Energy
Environment
Health, Food and Agriculture
Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
Manufacturing/Materials

While the applicant hosting HEI may make a case for funding to allow the mobility of a researcher of their choice, it is intended that the types of researchers outlined above will be given priority especially within the sectors listed here.

The VPC's Program is not intended to support short stays or visits as, while there are benefits to these activities, the emphasis will be on achieving significant and identifiable outputs that will create impact in the research ecosystem in Abu Dhabi.

It is expected that the candidate will aim to stay at a minimum of one year with priority being given to longer stays, ideally from two to four years. Consequently, periods shorter than four years for the "Rising Stars" and three years for the "Established Researchers" will be a major determining factor in considering the application for funding.

In cases where the individual may wish to remain in Abu Dhabi for a longer period it will be the responsibility of the host institution to consider mechanisms whereby this may be accomplished.

Targeted Researcher Profiles

The early to mid-career "Rising Star" researchers are expected to be 4 to 10 years post-terminal degree and be at a point in their research career where they have established a reputation in a particular domain and where they would profit from new resources to take their research to a new level. The aim would be to quickly get scale and international reputation in research in this area in Abu Dhabi.

Established researchers would be later than rising stars in their research careers and would have a strong scientific reputation in research and would have distinguished service at a senior level in either a research institute, university or industry. The aim here would be to build sustainable links with a particular institution(s) overseas with a clear view to outputs which would give Abu Dhabi a greater international profile, expand the opportunities for quality research as well as education and training activities.

The researchers will be qualified to Doctoral (or equivalent in terms of degree or experience) level, and to have a proven record of leadership and accomplishment appropriate to international standards in their field. They will also have to be normally resident outside UAE at the time of application and hold current

position in academia or industry. In the case of the established researcher category, academics that hold the emeritus status will also be eligible.

One of the aims of the VPC's program is to build sustainable links between the host organization and the overseas institution where the researcher normally resides. The preference would be to spend the majority of time at the host HEI, however, it is clear that in some cases there would need to be an appropriate balance of time spent by the individual between those two locations and this will be factored into the grant and the work plan.

Anticipated Outputs

The outputs of the VPC's Program will be:

- Increased competitive research funding into the research group in the host HEI from national and international sources.
- Attraction of higher numbers of national and international graduate students and postdocs.
- Increase in the numbers of publications in high quality journals, conference invitations etc.
- Increase citations for researchers and enhanced world rankings.
- Increase in industry links.
- Increase in commercialization activity, licensing, and number of patents.

Level of Funding Available

It is intended that the funding from the VPC's Program is a contribution to the host HEI towards the costs of receiving the Visiting Professor(s). It is not intended, however, to cover the total expenses.

- Rising stars will be funded AED 0.5M per year for 4 years. Total: AED 2M per professor over four years
- Established professors will be funded AED 1M per year for 3 years. Total: AED 3M per professor over three years

The following costs will be eligible for support:

- Salary and benefits of the VP, including housing and health insurance.
- Research Costs, including:
 - The employment of Post-Doctoral researchers and PhDs, covering salaries and associated costs.
 - The relocation of a small research team from the home organization.

- Consumables and small equipment associated with laboratory set up.
- Travel and expenses associated with return visits and conference attendance.

The over-riding criteria for evaluation are:

- The academic standing and achievements of the potential VP in terms of their research track record. In the case of early to mid-career “Rising Star” researchers, this should include comments by host HEI as to the likely trajectory of their career if support is provided by the VPC’s Program. For an established VP, comments on their standing in their own institution and nationally in their home country would be important.
- Their potential for making a substantial contribution to existing research skills in the host HEIs.
- The strategic value of the investment in this individual to the research area to Abu Dhabi.
- The emphasis on the diffusion of skills is important, including involvement in teaching, operation of workshops etc. Where a visit builds on existing collaboration, the host should explain what the visit(s) will achieve over and above past outcomes. It is the intention that the VP will provide a degree of expertise that is not otherwise available within the host HEI.

Application Process

The proposal must follow the template provided. EoIs must be formatted in Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial, 11-point font and single-spaced with no less than 1-inch margins. EoIs that are not compliant with the RFP guidelines will be excluded.