**Mekelle University**

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**Vice President for Research and Community Services**

**Guideline for Evaluation of Community Services Proposals**

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# Introduction

Mekelle University strives to support the development endeavor of country through research and community services. Consistent with the academic mission, the university established an institutional framework to encourage university-industry-community linkage and ensures research out puts reaches to the end users, community. Recently, the university has adopted a policy that governs the consultancy and community services of the university.

Recognizing community service as a key area of activity, the university is well positioned to provide funds for community service projects. To this effect, the university funds wide range community service projects and encourages academic staffs to make significant contribution to the communities.

The guideline serves for evaluation of community service proposals funded by the university and partner institutions. The guideline has more measurable criteria that will be used uniformly for evaluation and approval of community service projects across all colleges and institutes.

The aim of this guideline is to select eligible community service proposals that address community’s need in transparent way. Approved community service projects must support the University’s mission and have the greatest positive impact on the community.

# Community Service funding Process

## Submission of Proposals

All proposals should be prepared based on the Mekelle University proposal submission format through the e-research online system. Proposals shall not exceed twenty pages and shall ensure the following:

1. The proposals shall align with the thematic area and government policy of the country
2. All required documents are submitted through e-research before the closing date for each funding round.
3. CV's of all proponents (please use MU-CV format).
4. A researcher, who is principal investigator (already awarded) in more than one of anyone of the recurrent projects, cannot apply for community services as a PI.
5. A researcher cannot be a member in more than two projects of any recurrent budget sponsored projects

## Evaluation Approach

The Colleges/institutes Research and Community Services Council (RCSC) identifies and develops community services priority in line with thematic area, in consultation with the departments. Once the proposals are submitted by the staffs, the council members (evaluation committee) of the colleges/institutes shall evaluate and prioritize the proposals based on the criteria.

1. The evaluation team shall work together to evaluate each submitted proposals. Relevant professionals might give explanations, about technicalities of a proposal, to those not directly versed in the subject matter of a proposal in question. Finally each and every member of the evaluation committee will give independent marks to each of the proposals.
2. The evaluation committee shall be chaired by the RCSC Head. Another member shall act as a secretary. Both the chair and the secretary shall also give independent marks to proposals.
3. Final marks for each proposal will be averages of total marks given by each.

## Evaluation criteria

The criteria have three phases of evaluation, i.e. Screening/first step/, the general/ second step/ and specific/third step/ evaluation criterion. The screening criteria are the governing criteria whereby every project proposal must fulfil first. This screening step will be performed by college RCSC head to determine whether the proposal will pass or reject from the next evaluation step.

The next step is to evaluate submitted community service proposals passing the first step in detail using the set general and specific criteria. The general and specific criteria will be evaluated by every Research and Community Service Council (NB: at this time, they can invite research team leaders if they find it required) and rank the proposals based on their scores.

### Screening

Proposals shall be excluded from further evaluation if,

1. Proposals that do not fulfil the formatting and submission requirement (section 2.1).
2. The PI fails to submit report timely in the previous research/community/KTT fund schemes (if such thing happens by a member, the name of the member will be removed).
3. Community service proposals intend to work on religious and political organization
4. Applicant who involves in more than two community service projects in the same year

### General criteria

1. Does the proposed community service project support capacity building of public and private entities, professional and civic societies, and communities via transferring and sharing of advanced knowledge, skills and technologies? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ ,
2. Does the proposed community service project deal with immediate and imminent issues that affect their cultural, economical, and social lives; as well as in other cross-cutting issues that affect their well-being and safety, peace and gender inequality? Yes \_\_ No \_\_ ,
3. Does the proposed community service project assist local and national development and building and objective portrayal of local and national image? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ ,
4. Does the proposed community service project in line with the thematic area of the University? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
5. Does the proposed community service project enhance collaborations and linkages with local and overseas stakeholders and partners, Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If 80% of the above is “yes”, the proposal shall be considered for the next specific criteria.

### Specific criteria

The members of the evaluation committee, chaired by the RCSC head will give independent marks to each of the proposals according to criteria in Table 1.

**Specific criteria**

* 1. **Relevance of the involved staffs to the proposed subject matter (20%)**

The staffs who get involved in the community service are expected to be knowledgeable and expertise on the subject matter they would intend to provide the services.

* 1. **Clarity of the Scope of the community services works (10%):**

The project is clearly and eloquently stated and it is achievable under the proposed context and provisions

* 1. **Demonstrates the benefit to the community and partnership (20%)**

Demonstrates collaborative partnerships with other organizations and has stakeholder support (Evidence /support letter may be required). Responds to an identified need and/or an emerging issue in the community.

* 1. **The impact of outcomes of the work (10%)**

Every researcher is expected to produce feasible and tangible output which can be serving as input for the on-going development activities and solve the problem of the societies. The project demonstrates measurable outcomes (eg: feedback will be gathered)**.** Number of beneficiaries should be considered, if possible.

* 1. **Academic qualification and experiences of the team (10%):** This is to measure the professional knowledge, skill and attitude.
* Member of the team having an academic rank of Assistant Professor or above and experiences of 2 or more , 1 and 0 research project (s) relevant to the intended project will get 10/10, 8/10 and 6/10, respectively.
* Member of the team having an academic rank of lecturer and with experience of 2 or more, 1 and 0 research relevance to the intended project will get 7/10, 6/10 and 5/10, respectively.
* Member having an academic rank of assistant lecturer and with experience of 2 or more, 1 and 0 research relevant to the intended project will get 6/10, 5/10 and 4/10, respectively.
* Researchers having an academic rank less than the above once will get 3/10.
  + 1. **Clarity and Adequacy of the Proposed Methods of the Community Services (10%)**

It evaluates if the community services proposal employs standard procedures and/or protocols and tools to achieve the objectives, methodological suitability need to be assessed

* + 1. **Work plan (5 %)**

Demonstrates capacity to successfully undertake the proposal within the agreed timeframes.

* 1. **Budget rationality \*versus activity (15%)**

The budget of the community service proposal need to reflect the very meaning of serving the societies as it is considered as unpaid services and budget request should be reasonable and rational that cover essential cost only.

1. Does the majority of the budget item match the activities?
2. Does the budget item for refreshment and perdiem lies within reasonable limit?
3. Does the Budget line indicated disallowed cost (such as, manual preparation fee, professional fee etc? Costs for flyers, banners, brochures etc can be considered.

**NB:** Budget reasonable is to mean whether the proposed budget to cover every indicated activity in the proposed project is not less or more. Budgetirrationality isrelated to cost request for manual preparation and professional fees that would not be covered by community services budget. Please note that if the proposal is accepted, the researcher may be requested to modify the budget line according to the comment of the research council/ or evaluation committee and resubmitted.

Table-1: Summary of the evaluation criteria and score.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S. No** | **Criteria** | **Points** | **Remark** |
| 1 | Relevance of the staffs to the subject matter | 20% | Proposal scoring ≥60 will only be considered for funding |
| 2 | Clarity of the Scope of the community services works | 10% |
| 3 | Demonstrates the benefit to the community and provide sustainable outcomes | 20% |
| 4 | The impact of outcomes of the work | 10% |
| 5 | Academic qualification and experiences of the team | 10% |
| 6 | Clarity and Adequacy of the Proposed Methods | 10% |
| 7 | Work plan | 5% |  |
| 8 | Budget rationality versus activity | 15% |  |
| Total | | 100% |

# Approval Process

The number of proposals to be funded from each college in community services category will depend on the amount of research budget available for each college or institute. The evaluation committee should then prioritize and rank the proposals using the criteria. If applicant is not satisfied with evaluation results, The PI of the team can lodge complaints to College’s RCSC head within three days after the evaluation results is posted. Any complaint after the deadline will not be accepted. The College committee may be convened to examine the complaints that have been submitted by applicant and assesses the complaints on the basis of all the available information and decide on the issue and communicate the outcome to the applicant. The list of evaluated proposals and their ranks shall be sent in an official letter to the CCSO. Minutes of the evaluation committee shall be attached to this letter.

Every college/institute should be aware that community service project proposal which scores 60% and above will only be considered for funding. Applicants must meet all the eligibility criteria and only those proposals with a strong fit will be selected for funding. The top proposals will be selected and approved by CCSO. If prioritized proposals are found to be similar to previously funded projects or appears to contain inconsistent and inaccurate, such as financial information, the CCSO has the right to reject the proposals and move to the next top. No community service activity will be approved if it impeded or conflicts with the University responsibilities.

Successful grants awarded in each funding round will be notified through the online system with details of conditions requirement for funding. If the applicants accepts the conditional demand and revised the proposal accordingly, their proposal will be approved and the Principal Investigator (PI) requested to sign contract agreement. Written confirmation letter will be issued to PI, finances and RCSC head for their action. Successful applicants will be required to comply with the agreement’s conditions. All grant funding must be used for the purposes outlined in the proposal.

# Reporting and Recognition

The academic staffs that provide unpaid professional practice to individuals, communities, and private and public entities and demonstrate a deep commitment to serving their community shall be duly acknowledged. Staffs who complete university-funded community service projects shall submit full report to the CCSO in time (refer to the agreement for report submission deadline) and he/she will receive Letter of Recognition, only if the submitted report is accepted and approved by the same office. Letter of recognition for community services shall be sought to maximum of one year after the completion of the project (specified in the contract agreement). A team member who involved in the community service project shall be entitled to the recognition letter provided that he/she demonstrated his/her participation in the service.

Mekelle University encourages and recognizes staffs who take part in community services that has a voluntary nature and non-paid activities but must be pre-approved and recorded by the CCSO in order to get the recognition.

# Annex: Terminal Report Format

1. **Title of the Project (mandatory in Amharic and English)**

|  |
| --- |
| In English:  In Amharic: |

**2. Project management/Organization/ Co-ordination:**

a. Project’s registration number

|  |
| --- |
|  |

b. Principal investigator/ project coordinator and members (if any)

|  |
| --- |
|  |

c. Date of Reporting

|  |
| --- |
|  |

d. Project team member (s) in the outside of Mekelle University (if any)

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**3. Project duration:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Number of hours spent for services: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Number of participants/beneficiaries: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Places where community services provided**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Community services partners and stakeholders?**

a) The role and contribution of the partner organization/stakeholders

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| --- |
|  |

b) Addresses of contact person (s) and their role in the project:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

c) List names of individuals who participated in service

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**6. Funding**

a. Source of funding:

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| --- |
|  |

b. Fund utilized: indicate the amount of budget utilized for the reporting period.

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| --- |
|  |

c. Financial expenditure (detailed expenditure for the lifetime of the project by budget item). Any deviation from the plan must be justified.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Title of Expenses | Approved budget | Expenditure | Remark |
|  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total** | |  |  |  |

**7. Executive summary:**

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**8. Introduction**

a. What motivate you, basic questions, significance of the services, etc:

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| --- |
|  |

b. **Objectives/purpose**:

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| --- |
|  |

**9. Methodology and approaches used:**

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| --- |
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**10. Results:**

Discuss the main activities of your project, outline the steps you followed to implement, and complete the project, problems that occurred during the project, the impact of project on the community or on the people who received your service

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**11. Feedback of beneficiaries**

Discuss the main beneficiaries of the project:who are the beneficiaries of the service and their feedback

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|  |

**11. Conclusion**

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**12. For Trainings (please attach the manual)**

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**13. All the above information are correct**

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Project Coordinator /PI Signature and Date

**Approval**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Department Head Signature and Date

**Approval**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

College/Ins RCS Coordinator Signature and Date

**14. For CCSO Use Only (Final checking and approval)**

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Date of Submission