CONFERENCE & WORKSHOP SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM (CWSP)

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)
Nineteenth Cycle

Revised May 2020
# Acronyms and Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant</td>
<td>Member of the event organizing committee who must be affiliated to an approved submitting institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoI</td>
<td>Conflict of Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>Participatory meeting designed for discussion, fact-finding, problem solving and consultation. An event used by any organization to meet and exchange views, convey a message, open a debate or give publicity to some area of opinion on a specific issue. Conferences are generally on a smaller scale than congresses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention</td>
<td>An event where the primary activity of the attendees is to attend educational sessions, participate in meetings/discussions, socialize, or attend other organized events.</td>
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<tr>
<td>QF</td>
<td>Qatar Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWSP</td>
<td>Conference and Workshop Sponsorship Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Can be either a workshop or conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum</td>
<td>A discussion group, where ideas related to a subject can be raised and evaluated on a (more-or-less) equal and informal basis. Forum will usually be arranged on a formal basis - arranging the venue, inviting the participants, and deciding on the subject to be discussed - but would normally have an informal atmosphere where anybody can 'have their say'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QF RDI Entities list</td>
<td>Qatar Science &amp; Technology Park (QSTP), Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI), Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI), Qatar Cardiovascular Research Center (QCRC), Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), Sidra Medicine, Qatar Environment &amp; Energy Research Institute (QEERI), Qatar Solar Technologies (QST), Qatar BioBank (QBB), Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC).</td>
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<tr>
<td>QNRF</td>
<td>Qatar National Research Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>QNRS</td>
<td>Qatar National Research Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>RO</td>
<td>Research Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Lecture and dialogue allowing participants to share experiences in a particular field under the guidance of an expert discussion leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>Submitting Institution (must be inside Qatar and have an RO registered with QNRF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Symposium</td>
<td>A meeting of a number of experts in a particular field, at which papers are presented and discussed by specialists on particular subjects with a view to making recommendations concerning the problems under discussion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Structured learning session in which instructor presents specific information and techniques.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>A seminar, discussion group, or the like, that emphasizes exchange of ideas and the demonstration and application of techniques, and learn the methods and skills used in doing something.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPMS</td>
<td>Online Penalty Monitoring System</td>
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1. Overview

Qatar National Research Fund’s (QNRF) mission is to advance knowledge and education by supporting original, competitively selected research in all fields of sciences, with an emphasis on the following four pillars of the Qatar National Research Strategy (QNRS) (http://www.qnrf.org/en-us/About-Us/QNRS):

- Energy and Environment
- Computer Science and ICT
- Health
- Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

To complement its vision of fostering a research culture in Qatar, QNRF introduced the Conference and Workshop Sponsorship Program (CWSP). The Program aims to connect researchers in Qatar to their peers and colleagues, both at home and abroad, by exposing researchers or students to new research directions, findings, and education techniques. The CWSP will provide a hub for informing scientists from abroad about research and opportunities in Qatar through interaction with their counterparts here, and encourage them to explore opportunities for collaboration.

2. Program Description

2.1. QNRF will sponsor events that are aligned to QNRS (http://www.qnrf.org/en-us/About-Us/QNRS) and will result in the following achievements:

2.1.1. Create a framework that fosters collaboration between researchers in Qatar and the global research community.

2.1.2. Attract and encourage academic, government or private organizations in the State of Qatar to host scientific and academic conferences that are research-orientated.

2.1.3. Attract international research institutions to host their periodic conferences and workshops in Qatar.
2.1.4. Reiterate the importance of research for undergraduate and postgraduate students in Qatar.

2.2. The sponsorship of international conferences and workshops allows greater contact and increased collaborative exchanges between those working in Qatar and those coming from outside. It aids the cause of education in general, and adds insight and inspiration to relevant on-going research in Qatar.

2.3. QNRF strongly encourages the publication of conference proceedings and workshop summary reports in order to yield additional benefits both in publicizing QNRF’s activities and facilitating future research. These should be uploaded online in the CWSP channel after the event.

2.4. Currently, there are two forms of events that are supported by the CWSP:

2.4.1. **Conferences**: scientific, technical, and other conferences involving national and international researchers as formalized events. Scientists from one or several organizations present their research results in keynote speeches, oral presentations, poster sessions, or by other appropriate means. Conferences are designed for discussion, exchange of information, fact-finding, problem-solving and consultation. Conferences typically take place over several days with large number of participants. Conferences tend to be formal with greater focus on lectures.

2.4.2. **Workshops**: these are for national and international researchers from one or several organizations that focus on a specific topic that has been identified and presented by specialists in the field. This is followed by discussion and activities, in which participants work collaboratively to investigate, analyse and formulate a solution to the problem. Workshops should emphasize free discussion, exchange of ideas, demonstration of methods of practical application of skills and principles. Workshops can also take the form of a meeting for intensive discussion with a greater degree of attendee participation and interaction, and hands-on exercises. Workshops typically are of shorter duration and have a small number of participants who come together to benefit from the knowledge of experts. Workshops tend to be informal and there is less focus on lectures.
2.5. QNRF follows two methods for soliciting proposals for CWSP from researchers based in Qatar:

2.5.1. **Periodical call:** Applicants can submit their proposals every cycle as per the guidelines in this Request For Applications (RFA) document and the timelines.

2.5.2. **QNRF Initiated:** As per QNRF’s strategic assessment and benefits, QNRF can invite specific organization/s within Qatar to submit CWSP proposals focusing on areas specified by QNRF. These institutions would designate the lead researchers in that area from their research team to submit a CWSP application. Such proposals will then compete with the applications received in response to the RFA for that particular cycle of CWSP and will undergo through the same review process.

2.6. CWSP will only sponsor conferences and workshops that are to be held in Qatar.

2.7. The sponsorship decision will be made on a competitive basis, depending on the evaluation outcome and available fund.

2.8. QNRF will not accept any appeal against its sponsorship decision, which should be final.

2.9. QNRF’s final funding decision notification will be made available according to the timeline mentioned in Section 5.

2.10. Electronic online submissions must be completed in accordance with the timeline in Section 5.

3. **Eligibility Criteria**

3.1. The applicant must be a member of the event organizing committee and affiliated to the submitting institution (SI).

3.2. The SI must be located inside Qatar and should have a research office that is already registered with QNRF.

3.3. QNRF will only consider sponsorship requests that are submitted through its online submission system.

3.4. QNRF will only consider sponsorship requests that are RO vetted by the SI.
3.5. LPI must be a researcher affiliated with an institution inside Qatar, holds a research-oriented doctorate or any of the approved terminal degrees as defined under the approved list of terminal degrees and has at least five peer reviewed publications.

3.5.1. The list of approved terminal agrees can be found at http://www.qnrf.org/Portals/0/Approved list of Terminal Degrees_Final_1492015 17 11 16.pdf

3.6. The event theme must be evidently research-orientated.

3.7. The event must be aligned to one of the QNRS objectives (http://www.qnrf.org/en-us/About-Us/QNRS).

3.8. The proposed date of the event must be at least four months after the submission deadline of the CWSP cycle in which application has been submitted

4. **Budget**

4.1. QNRF evaluates each request and award based on the alignment with QNRS and potential benefit for addressing Qatar’s Grand Challenges. QNRF guideline is a max of $50,000 total cost for the proposed event

4.2. In exceptional cases (i.e. when the proposed event has the potential of providing exceptional value to the R&D interests of Qatar), QNRF will consider deviations from the guidelines. Process to be followed in such cases starts with making a formal request to Executive Director (ED) of QNRF with detailed justifications for reasons that lead to increase in budget above $50,000. If QNRF ED deems the request legitimate and of exceptional value to Qatar’s research interests, then a special link will be sent to the applicant for submitting their proposal. All applications will go through the evaluation process of CWSP before funding decisions are made.

4.3. QNRF reserves the right to reduce the amount awarded to any awardee selected or reject any proposal submitted.

4.4. CWSP sponsorship shall only cover the following budget items:

4.4.1. Event venue rental costs

4.4.2. Publicity material

4.4.3. Economy class flight travel cost for international speakers

4.4.4. Hotel accommodation for international speakers.
Hence, co-sponsorship is encouraged to cover any other expenses that are not covered by the CWSP grant, for example: indirect costs, food & beverages, local transportation, etc.

4.5. The applicant should complete the online CWSP budget information form to illustrate the event’s overall expenses, which will be considered during the evaluation process.

5. **Timeline**

5.1. In any given cycle of CWSP, applications should be submitted for events occurring at least four months after the submission deadline. This is required in order to give QNRF enough time after the submission deadline for conducting the evaluation process, and signing the agreements (if awarded).

5.2. The review process will take place biannually for the proposals submitted and vetted by the respective institute’s Research Officer (RO) as per the timelines posted on CWSP webpage on the QNRF website.

5.3. Results of QNRF’s evaluation would be communicated to the applicants after the end of approximately three months from a given cycle’s submission and RO vetting deadline.

5.4. For the upcoming cycle, the timelines will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CWSP Cycle 19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online submission starts</td>
<td>1 June 2020 12:00 Noon, Doha time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online submission deadline</td>
<td>14 June 2020 12:00 Noon, Doha time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO Vetting deadline</td>
<td>21 June 2020 12:00 Noon, Doha time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcement of results</td>
<td>End of November 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Submission

6.1. For each cycle of CWSP, the online submission channel (https://oss.qgrants.org/) is opened for few weeks in the corresponding cycle for applicants to submit their applications.

6.2. Applicant has to login to the CWSP submission channel and submit all the required information, taking into consideration all of the guidelines for a sponsorship request.

6.3. The proposal should contain details/plan of how the event will be organized and why the applicant team is most suitable to organize this event in Qatar.

6.4. The proposal will then automatically be forwarded to SI’s RO for vetting before it is received by QNRF.

6.5. All changes to the sponsorship application, during either the pre- or post-award phase, (e.g. event date, adding a co-sponsor, change in the number of participants, etc.) shall be conversed via the CWSP-Change Request channel and validated by QNRF before execution.

6.6. The proposal will then automatically be forwarded to SI’s RO for vetting before it is received by QNRF.

6.7. Please see the Annexure – I for the information sought by reviewers while reviewing the CWSP applications.

7. Evaluation

Every CWSP proposal will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

7.1. Quality of Research Content and relevance to Qatar
   7.1.1. Topics discussed and papers presented
   7.1.2. Research techniques taught/discussed
   7.1.3. Relevance to Qatar’s context

7.2. Planning and organisation
   7.2.1. Detailed program agenda/schedule
   7.2.2. Reasonable budget and sponsorship request
   7.2.3. Profile of the organising institution and speakers
7.2.4. Event plan
7.2.5. Co-sponsorship commitments

7.3. Benefits to research area’s community/ecosystem in Qatar
    7.3.1. Reputation of partners associated and/or response to past conferences
    7.3.2. How will the event strengthen Qatar’s research community/ecosystem in its field
    7.3.3. Capacity building
    7.3.4. What kind of collaborations could the event potentially lead to
    7.3.5. Number of local and international researchers participating

7.4. Stakeholder engagement
    7.4.1. What is the level of involvement of industry, government and other academics/researchers
    7.4.2. Is there student engagement

7.5. Strategic benefits for QNRF
    7.5.1. Alignment with other programs of QNRF e.g. showcasing of NPRP outcomes
    7.5.2. Recognition for QNRF at international, regional and local level
    7.5.3. Value for QNRF e.g. potential increase in number/quality of proposals, alignment with QNRF’s plans for the research area, etc.

8. Disqualification

QNRF may consider a sponsorship proposal as disqualified for any of the following reasons:
8.1. Missing information
8.2. Uploading wrong documents
8.3. Failure to meet QNRF policies, and CWSP rules and eligibility criteria

9. Submitting Institution’s Role

9.1. Obligations and Duties
9.1.1. All sponsorship expenses should be expended in compliance with the SI’s policies and procedures. QNRF requires the submission of the final financial statement for items sponsored by QNRF.

9.1.2. The SI will be obliged to offer QNRF all the privileges stated below, as applicable and agreed upon between the two parties in the sponsorship agreement:

9.1.2.1. Extensive branding and top visibility at the event.

9.1.2.2. QNRF logo representation on all promotional materials, including:
   9.1.2.2.1. Mailing materials
   9.1.2.2.2. Printed event program
   9.1.2.2.3. Event website including logo and hyperlink to QNRF home page
   9.1.2.2.4. QNRF mention in all media including social media and press releases

9.1.2.5. Signage at event and social functions

9.1.2.3. QNRF banner to be posted in a prominent area of the venue(s).

9.1.2.4. QNRF will be given a minimum of five full registrations.

9.1.2.5. Acknowledgment of QNRF’s sponsorship at the opening session.

9.1.2.6. Presentation by QNRF during the opening session of event.

9.1.2.7. QNRF will be given the opportunity to provide promotional items in the delegate bag (e.g. literature, brochure, and any other corporate collaterals).

9.1.2.8. One trade show table in a premium location where applicable.

9.1.2.9. Upload the items mentioned below via QNRF special CWSP channel:
   9.1.2.9.1. An electronic copy of the event proceedings.
   9.1.2.9.2. A list of the attendees’ and presenters’ contact information.
   9.1.2.9.3. An electronic copy of the Workshop Summary Report submitted within 30 days from the event end date. This report must have the following sections:
      a) Summary of the event
b) Survey reflecting attendees feedback covering the following
   - Registration Process
   - Speakers/Presenters skills
   - Content of the sessions
   - Quality of materials distributed
   - Duration of the conference
   - Conference organization
   - Facilities
   - Recommendations

c) Information on the workshop participants

d) Outcomes
   - Including list of publications resulting from event

e) Outline co-sponsors of event

f) Recommendations

9.2. Sponsorship Management

9.2.1. Upon notification of QNRF sponsorship approval, QNRF will send a
   Conference or a Workshop Sponsorship Agreement to the SI indicating the
   approved sponsored amount and its associated obligations. Two original
   copies of this contract must be sent to QNRF within 15 days of award
   announcement by the SI after getting it duly signed and stamped. Failure to
   do so would amount to cancellation of the award. Along with the contracts,
   the SI must send an invoice for 100% of the payment.

9.2.2. Once the sponsorship agreement has been signed by both authorized
   representatives of the SI and QNRF, an invoice of 100% of the sponsorship
   amount will be transferred to the SI’s nominated account.

9.2.3 Failure or delay in providing deliverables will be noted in closing report and will
   affect future applications of SI and LPI.

9.2.4. After receiving confirmation that QNRF has processed the payment, the SI
   shall allow 60 days for the funds to reach its nominated bank account.
9.2.5. QNRF’s authorized representative will liaise with the SI on the implementation of the terms of the agreement, to include attending the event and reporting on the compliance with the terms of the sponsorship.

9.2.6. Awardee is allowed to request for the change of date, LPI and venue for the proposed event on the condition that an official letter is signed and uploaded into the post-award channel and the QNRF focal point and CWSP program officer have been duly noted.

9.2.7. QNRF reserves the right to take appropriate action and consider declining future requests for sponsorship from that specific institution should there be a failure to comply with some or all the terms in the agreement.

9.2.8. After completion of the event the SI must submit the final event report and its requirements within 30 days of the event end date. Any delay will be reflected in the Online Penalty Monitoring System (OPMS) affecting investigator’s future funding applications and the renewal of existing research projects. For Research Offices, the delay will affect the final cumulative score impacting the RO’s best award for the year.

10. Conflict of interest

Applicants are advised to be mindful of any possible Conflict of Interest by referring to Section III of the QNRF Research Ethics Guide (http://www.qnrf.org/en-us/Funding/Research-Ethics-Guide).

11. Enquiries

For any enquiry about the program and the electronic submission process, please use the QNRF “Support” link on the website (http://support.qnrf.org/index.php/?Tickets/Submit). Applicants can choose the appropriate department and specify the topic of query for further information.

QNRF reserves the right to update/edit this Request for Applications document anytime and including middle of a cycle when applications are still being submitted for that particular cycle.
12. Appendix – I: CWSP Application Questionnaire

In addition to the questions in the online application channel, applicants must complete and upload this questionnaire as part of their CWSP proposal. To ensure that your application is competitive, please make sure to include the responses to following questions in your application as a single PDF attachment:

1. Clearly outline the goals and objectives of the proposed event (2000 characters)
2. Describe the research topics to be discussed and why those will benefit the research ecosystem in Qatar. How will the event contribute to engagement and capacity building of students and early career researchers in Qatar? (5000 characters)
3. What kind of collaborations would emerge from this event that would benefit Qatar? How will this event contribute to building a strong reputation in research internationally for Qatar? What will be the outcomes of this event and how those will be spread to the relevant stakeholders? Outcomes could be papers, proceedings, policy recommendations, etc. (6000 characters)
4. Why is the Submitting Institution best suited to organize this event? (3000 characters)
5. How applicant’s research background and experiences make her/him most suitable to organize this event in Qatar? (2000 characters)
6. Among the existing stakeholders within Qatar for this domain, how many and which all would be partnering with this event and what will be there contributions? (2000 characters)
7. List recent similar events in Qatar and the region (or elsewhere if relevant). Has this conference/workshop happened before? If yes, then please share its success parameters for the all the years it happened e.g. number of people participating, location, dates, names of sponsors, media coverage, etc. If no, then please propose some numerical metrics for defining success of this event. (3000 characters)
8. Does this proposal have any connections with QNRF funded projects of applicant or the institution? Yes/No. If yes, then provide the proposal number and other details.