

AUB Receives Research Collaborative Awards from the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF)

Monday, October 4, 2010

The American University of Beirut was recently awarded eight research grants in collaboration with universities and institutions in Lebanon and Qatar through the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. The Qatar Foundation was established by Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir of Qatar, and is chaired by Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned. In its aim to advance knowledge, QNRF provides funding for original research and fosters collaborations between academic institutions and the private and public sectors through its annual program, the National Priorities Research Program (NPRP). In September 2009, the Office of Grants and Contracts at AUB served as a QNRF focal point for universities in Lebanon and hosted a presentation on NPRP by QNRF representatives: Dr. Abdul Sattar Al-Taie, executive director; Dr. Nabeel Al-Salem, deputy director; and Dr. Khalid Al-Quradaghi. QNRF representatives also had the chance to meet faculty members and officials from AUB and other universities in Lebanon. In the NPRP 3rd cycle, a total of 536 proposals were submitted for funding, however, only 126 proposals received awards. The submitted proposals were independently peer reviewed by up to five international reviewers.

Thirteen of the projects receiving awards were from Arab countries (other than Qatar); eight of the thirteen were awarded to AUB in the following disciplines: natural science; engineering and technology; medical and health sciences; and social sciences. The projects, which range from one to three years in duration, will begin in October 2010 with average annual budgets of \$122,500.

The winning projects at AUB are:

1. “Controlling Use of Narghile Smoking: Testing the Impact of an RCT of a School-Based Prevention Program”; Dr. Rima Afifi as Lead Principal Investigator and Dr. Rima Nakkash as Principal Investigator and Dr. Ziyad Mahfoud as Co-Principal Investigator from the Faculty of Health Sciences at AUB; in collaboration with Dr. Ahmad Al Mulla as Co-Lead Principal Investigator, and Drs. Ibrahim Janahi and Alanoud Alansari as Co-Principal Investigators from Hamad Medical Corporation in Qatar;
2. “A Distributed Reconfigurable Active Storage Platform for Data-Intensive Applications”; Dr. Hassan Artail as Principal Investigator, and Drs. Haitham Akkary, Hazem Hajj and Mariette Awad as Co-Principal Investigators from the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture at AUB; in collaboration with Dr. Mazen Saghir as Lead Principal Investigator from Texas A&M University in Qatar;
3. “Optimized Energy Efficient Video Streaming Strategies for Wireless Networks with Mobile to Mobile Cooperation”; Dr. Zaher Dawy (Faculty of Engineering and Architecture) as Lead Principal Investigator and Dr. George Turkiyyeh (Faculty of Arts and Sciences) as Co-Principal Investigator from AUB; and Dr. S. Sharafeddine

as Principal Investigator from the Lebanese American University; in collaboration with Dr. A. Abu Dayya as Co-Lead Principal Investigator, and Dr. F. Filali as Co-Principal Investigator from Qatar University Wireless Innovations Center (QUWIC).

4. “From Fundamental Understanding to Predictive Design of Layered Nanomaterials”; Dr. Mazen El Ghouli as Principal Investigator from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at AUB; in collaboration with Dr. Peter Coveney as Lead Principal Investigator from University College London and Dr. Mahmoud Khader as Co-Lead Principal Investigator from Qatar University;
5. “Zinc-Dependent Regulation of the Cell Cycle Regulator CDC25 as Potential Anti-Cancer Target”; Dr. Hala Muhtasib as Principal Investigator from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at AUB; in collaboration with Dr. Khaled Machaca as Lead Principal Investigator from the Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar; and Dr. Olga Boudker as Co-Principal Investigator from the Weill Cornell Medical College in New York;
6. “Targeting Leukemia Initiating Cells by Arsenic and Interferon Alpha in CML and ATL”; Dr. Rihab Nasr as Lead Principal Investigator, and Drs. Ali Bazarbachi as and Marwan El-Sabban as Co-Principal Investigators from the Faculty of Medicine at AUB; in collaboration with Dr. Hanadi El Ayoubi as Co-Lead Principal Investigator, and Dr. Zafar Nawaz as Co-Principal Investigator from Hamad Medical Corporation in Qatar;
7. “An Integrated Model for Evaluating E-Government Services Transformation”; Dr. Ibrahim Osman as Lead Principal Investigator, and Drs. Bijan Azad and Lina Daouk as Co-Principal Investigators from the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business at AUB; in collaboration with Dr. Nitham Hindi as Co-Lead Principal Investigator from Qatar University; and Dr. Zaher Irani as Principal Investigator and Drs. Habin Lee and Vishanth Weerakkody as Co-Principal Investigators from Brunel University;
8. “Consanguinity Factor in the Genetics of Pre-Maturity”; Professor Khaled Yunis as the Lead Principal Investigator from the Faculty of Medicine at AUB in collaboration with Dr. Hatem El Shanti, as Co-Lead Principal Investigator from the Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs, Dr. Jeffrey C. Murray as Co-Principal Investigator from the University of Iowa in the USA, and Dr. Mary Marazita as Co-Principal Investigator from University of Pittsburgh in the USA and Dr. Pierre Zalloua, as Co-Principal Investigator from the Lebanese American University in Lebanon;

AUB Provost Ahmad Dallal said: “This achievement illustrates the excellence of our faculty members and their ability to produce knowledge that conforms to the highest scientific standards, but is also relevant to their societies. It also underscores the value and great potential of collaborative research, which AUB aspires to cultivate in partnership with local and regional scholars and institutions.”

The American University of Beirut thanks the Qatar Foundation and QNRF for their support and looks forward to further partnerships and collaborations.