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Qatar National Research Fund Awards Grants to a Record 162 Proposals at 6th Annual

Forum

- Under the theme “Building on Success,” QNRF representatives highlight organisation’s milestones over the past eight years.
- Researchers reveal results and insights from QNRF funded projects
- QNRF awards Best Researcher, Best Research Team, and Best Research Office in Qatar

Doha, 14 May 2014: Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), a centre of Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D), has awarded research grants to 162 proposals across 22 institutions in Qatar during the seventh cycle of its flagship National Priorities Research Program (NPRP). The results were announced during the 6th QNRF Annual Forum held at the Qatar National Convention Centre.

Themed ‘Building on Success’, the Forum, held under the patronage of Mr. Faisal Alsuwaidi, President of QF R&D, was attended by more than 400 members of Qatar’s research community and streamed live on QNRF’s website.

Highlighting the success and achievements of QNRF, Mr Alsuwaidi, in his opening speech, said: “Qatar National Research Fund continues to help in building a vibrant research culture in Qatar by fostering human capacity and investing in the research enterprise. QNRF is focused on Qatar’s priorities by delivering along the Qatar National Research Strategy and in support of the Qatar National Vision 2030.”

He added: “We are proud that QNRF’s flagship funding program continues to inspire originality, as it encourages greater collaboration between the international community and researchers in Qatar.”

The awarded proposals are aligned with the four pillars of the Qatar National Research Strategy (QNRS), namely energy and environment, computer science and information and communications technology, health and life sciences, and social sciences.

The awarded research topics range from engineering, water security, and cyber security to road traffic accidents, as well as diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular and infectious diseases. Projects that delve into topics including education, urban development, business innovation, culture, language and identity were also awarded by QNRF.

QNRF received 798 proposals in the seventh cycle of the NPRP, an 18 percent increase in the number of applications, compared with the previous cycle. This most recent cycle also saw the number of applications from Qatari lead principal investigators double.

Addressing the continued success of the NPRP, Dr Abdul Sattar Al-Taie, QNRF’s Executive Director, said: “I am proud to see a significant increase in the number of proposals we received during this cycle as it shows that research activity in Qatar is

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growing steadily. We therefore remain committed to building on this success as we continue in our efforts to drive Qatar's research sector."

Furthermore, as part of the Forum, QNRF invited six researchers from four institutions to present the results of their research projects and share their success stories with those attending.

QNRF also recognised researchers and research offices with well-deserved awards. The Best Research Team Award in 2014 went to the team working on novel concepts of emission and transmission of light for optical information technologies. The team is led by Texas A&M University at Qatar and is comprised of researchers from leading institutions in the United States, Germany, China, Serbia, and Australia. Collectively, they have published 32 journal papers, five conference papers, one book chapter and nine online papers.

The Best Researcher Award for 2014 was bestowed upon Dr. Shahin Rafii from Weill Cornell Medical College as recognition for his diligent work ethics as well as having published 14 journal papers and a book chapter. In addition, Qatar University was also acknowledged as the Best Research Office in 2014 for the organization's excellent punctuality and compliance during pre-funding and post-funding phases.

As QNRF's flagship funding programme, the NPRP aims to support Qatari institutions by building the infrastructure necessary to support high-quality research. The programme is also a platform from which local researchers can work with prestigious global institutions to conduct research vital to Qatar's development and sustainability.

Elaborating further on the developments of NPRP this cycle, Ms. Noor Al-Merekhi, NPRP Program Manager said: "We introduced a new element to the 7th cycle of NPRP, namely the launch of the Renewal Grants system, which is designed to encourage sustainability and successful research grants with potential outcomes. Researchers who had completed an NPRP project were able to apply for renewed funding to further build on the results of their completed research."

Ms. Al-Merekhi added: "I am pleased to see that as part of this cycle, we received 16 renewal applications out of which 10 were awarded to researchers across Qatar.

For a full list of the winning institutions and more information about their research proposals please visit www.qnrf.org/awarded_proposals

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About Qatar Foundation Research and Development (QF R&D)

Leading Qatar's vision to become an international centre for research and development excellence and innovation, (QF R&D) is home to Qatar Science & Technology Park, a world-class hub for technology innovation and commercialization, as well as the Qatar National Research

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Fund, a globally renowned scientific research funding organization, and prominent research institutes operating at the frontiers of science, including Qatar Biomedical Research Institute, Qatar Computing Research Institute and Qatar Energy and Environment Research Institute.

About Qatar National Research Fund (QNRf)

Driven by the aim of fostering a culture of research in Qatar, Qatar National Research Fund (QNRf) was established in 2006 to advance knowledge and education by acting as a support system for researchers. It is a centre within the Research & Development establishment at Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development.

QNRf administers funding for original, competitively selected research and furthers collaborations within academia, the public, private, governmental and non-governmental sectors through effective, mutually beneficial partnerships. While QNRf actively seeks internationally recognised researchers, it is dedicated to funding research that meets the needs of Qatar. For more information, visit: www.qnrf.org

For more information about this press release, please contact:

Basil Mahfouz
Account Manager
BLJ Worldwide
Tel: +974 7021 8269
Email: basilm@bljworldwide.com

For more information about Qatar Foundation, please contact:

Anwar El-Shamy
Press Office Coordinator
Qatar Foundation
Tel: +974 5590 4407
Email: aelshamy@qf.org.qa