



**NTRA**  
National Telecom Regulatory Authority  
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Research & Development Department

**CFP8**

# Research Grants



***8<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals (CFP8)***

***General Guidelines***

**July 2024**

## I. Scope

With the objective of supporting the research environment at the national level in the area of telecommunications and to keep pace with emerging applications and surmount associated challenges, the NTRA announces calls for proposals (CFP) to fund applied projects involving a collaboration between national universities/research institutes and small and micro companies in certain priority areas and fields. Such priority areas are determined in accordance with public and industry needs, NTRA interests, and worldwide trends.

Accordingly, NTRA will announce Calls in order to move a product concept from the proof-of-concept and prototype stages, to a complete product ready to hit the market. Projects aim to preparing and testing the industrial product at its final form that will meet the market needs in various sectors. The funding project should be implemented within 1٢ months.

## II. Proposals Theme

- Proposals applied in this Call target building products/applications and services to solve real problems specially in telecommunication sector.
- The research team should identify problems of interest to and collaborate with an industrial entity to solve industrial problems using innovative and/or effective techniques.
- A support letter from a governmental entity (e.g., the National Transportation Authority, the ministry of Irrigation...) or industrial institute that shows interest and the benefits of building the prototype is highly recommended for this type of research.
- Applicants should avoid proposals that are: (i) seeking mere academic curiosity; (ii) of marginal contribution to existing works and systems; and (iii) straightforward system integration.

## III. Guidelines

### A. Team Members

- Practically, the maximum time allocation percentage of the primary investigator (PI) and any faculty staff member/consultant/expert is considered as 40% of his/her time.
- Any team member cannot be involved in more than two active projects with NTRA. And he/she can act as a PI in one project at most.
- All projects are encouraged to have full-time Research Assistants (RAs) and Technicians.
- Teaching Assistants (TAs) employed by the applicant institutes and technical engineers are also encouraged to work in the project (40% of his/her time).

### B. Budget

- NTRA funds only research teams at national public universities and research centers as well as Ahleya, non-governmental and non-profit universities/institutes in addition to experts and consultants.
- The compensation rate (Sabbatical allowance) of the team members will be according to the academic achievements (A), academic rank (R), and the industrial achievements and experiences (E) as in the following table:

Degree	Sabbatical allowance (LE) (Tax net)
Full Professor/Experts	250
Associate, Assistant Professor/Consultants	200
TA/RA student	125
Technicians	100

- A budget file is available on the NTRA website. Applicants should fill in and submit this budget file during the submission process. Applicants should review all the entries of the file and be sure that all budget items are included in the final sum.
- The submitted budget is considered as an initial budget. After proposal approval, NTRA will work out the exact budget details and items with the applicants.
- All items of the budget should be justified. The “comments” part in the budget file is used to write justifications for the required items. If additional space is needed, applicants can add a section in their proposal entitled "budget justification" to justify the items of their budget.
- The budget can include an institution Logistics and consumables of up to 20% of the team salaries. No overhead is calculated on any other items such as equipment, facilities, or publications.
- The budget should contain a detailed list of the required equipment, along with quotes from sellers or websites as an estimate of the equipment cost. It is acceptable to allocate a budget to "miscellaneous items" including resistors, PCB fabrication, ... etc.
- It is recommended to use open source SW tools where possible. Otherwise, justification of required tools should be provided.

### C. General Rules

- The NTRA motivates the teams to patent their findings and convert their results to commercial products. In case of having an IP or a profit return (when utilizing any of the project outcomes), the NTRA keeps a share of the IP and the profit in proportions consistent with the NTRA fund according to the following:

- 5% of the equity in the case of financing the project with a value of less than or equal 1,000,000 LE.
- 10% in the case of financing a project with a value of more than 1,000,000 LE and less than or equal 5,000,000 LE.
- 15% in case of financing the project with a value of more than 5,000,000 LE and less than or equal 10,000,000 LE.
- 20% in case of financing the project with a value of more than 10,000,000 LE and less than or equal 15,000,000 LE.
- 25% in case of financing the project with a value of more than 15,000,000 LE and less than or equal 20,000,000 LE.
- During the first 3 months of the project, there should be:
  - A professional website for the project (preferably linked to the main website of the institute) updated periodically (monthly at most) to view the results and activities carried out by the research team.
  - A convenient working place with the supporting infrastructure (Internet access, desks, ... etc). The hosting institute is responsible for allocating this infrastructure and cannot be part of the budget.
- Typically, the equipment purchased during the project will be owned on loan by the main applying institute, unless the NTRA decides otherwise. The NTRA also reserves the right to recover or borrow some or all of these equipment and programs.
- The accepted project will typically have quarterly review.

#### **D. Proposal Structure**

A proposal template is posted and has to be used by the applicants. The proposal should include all supporting work, references, prototypes or previous research done by the team that relate to the subject of the submitted proposal. Furthermore, a team competency document including the team CVs should be attached.

### **IV. Application Procedure**

- A.** If the applicants are not sure if the proposal falls into an area of interest to the NTRA, then they are encouraged to send the project title and an abstract (as indicated in the template on the website) to [rd.projects@tra.gov.eg](mailto:rd.projects@tra.gov.eg) before the deadline for submission by at least two weeks. The R&D department will respond in few days with a decision about the relevance of the project to the call for proposals.

## B. Submission process:

1. The proposal will be submitted to the R&D ([rd.projects@tra.gov.eg](mailto:rd.projects@tra.gov.eg)) as email attachments, the PI should attach a zip file, including the proposal and the team competency file, in addition to the budget file.
2. The proposal will not be considered for the review round unless it is submitted before the submission deadline.
3. A confirmation email will be sent upon proposal submission. If not, please resend again or Call us at 02- 3534-4045.

## V. Evaluation Process

Applicants can download the evaluation sheet which includes a list of the evaluation criteria to be considered. This should help the applicants tune their proposal to match the target criteria and to maximize their acceptance chances.

### A. The evaluation stages

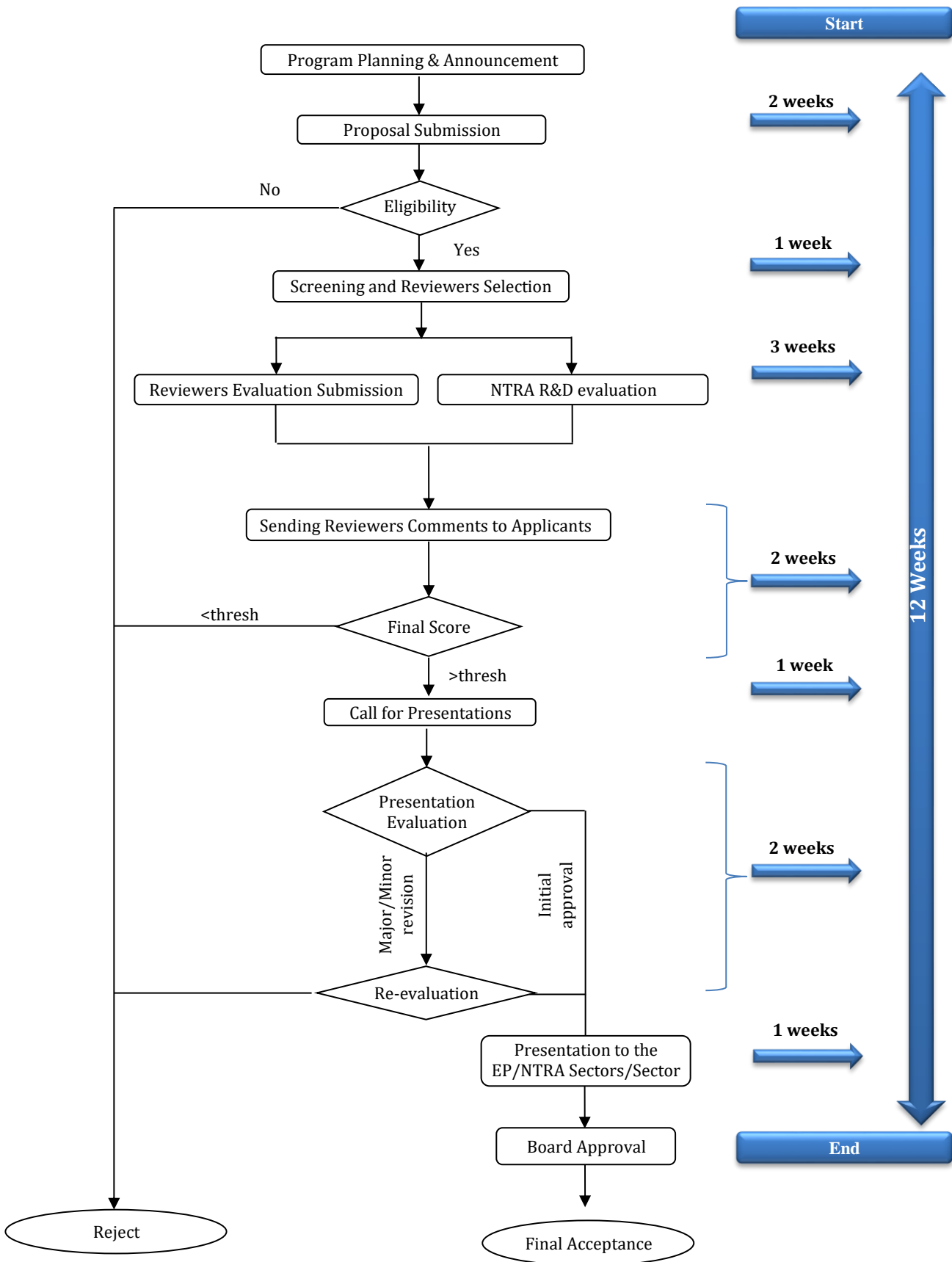
1. Screening: Each proposal is first checked for compliance with the general structure and guidelines as described in this document.
2. Review process: Each proposal is assessed by up to three external reviewers. After receiving the reviewers' feedback, the NTRA will send the aggregate comments to the applicants along with a decision (reject or short listed).
3. Oral Presentation: Short-listed proposals will be called for oral presentations before the R&D committee. During the presentation, the applicants should focus on answering the reviewers' comments that they have received.

### B. Scoring

- The total score (100 points) is divided as follows:  
$$\text{Total Score} = \text{Reviewers Score (70)} + \text{NTRA Score (30)}$$
- Proposals with scores below a certain threshold will be rejected at this stage. Others will pass to the oral presentations.

## VI. Agreement Finalization

Once the proposal is technically approved, the details of the budget will be discussed with the PI. The agreement contract will be sent to the applicants for review. The contract will be signed by both the NTRA and the leading institute.



Proposals' Evaluation Process

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**General terms and conditions include:**

- NTRA's fund will be partially available (typically over three-month periods) via money transfer to the leading institute. At the end of each period, NTRA will assess the project progress (with the aid of an external examiner). The applicants have to submit technical and financial reports for each period. Based on the evaluation outcomes, the next installment will be fully or partially paid to the leading institute. In case of clear and unavoidable problems, the examiner (or NTRA) may recommend termination of the project.
- NTRA's staff can participate in the development phases of the project.
- The applicants' main institute is responsible for maintaining the sustainability of the established centers or labs after the conclusion of the project.
- Applicants should provide all reports and material required by NTRA. Periodical seminars should also be offered at NTRA as part of the evaluation process.
- Encouragement of involving students (both graduate and undergraduate), and junior researchers as well as introducing educational components during the course of the project.
- Each accepted project should:
  - Clearly refer to the NTRA support where applicable (project website, publications, lab, events, ...).
  - Cooperate with the Egyptian and international universities and research centers that are recommended by the NTRA so as to enrich the research process.
  - Allow the use of all devices and equipment that are purchased from the budget of the project (excluding personal devices such as computers and printers) to Egyptian researchers from all universities and research centers.