

Approved by  
the March 2, 2021, N8-3 resolution of  
the Scientific Council of  
the "Armenian State University of Economics"  
State Non-Commercial Organization  
Chairman of the Scientific Council,  
Rector  
Diana Galoyan

March 2, 2021

## **PROCEDURE**

(Paragraph 1 of ASUE SNCO Scientific Council December 18, 2019 N1 resolution in a new wording)

### **OF**

## **FORMATION OF RESEARCH TOPICS AND GROUPS OF THE ARMENIAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS "AMBERD" RESEARCH CENTER AND INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENTS AND POSTGRADUATES IN THE LATTER**

### **I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. This procedure defines the conditions for the development and approval of research topics, the organization and holding of competitions for their implementation, the formation of research groups with the involvement of performers, the provision of their financial support, and the mandatory involvement of students and graduate students in research groups in the "Amberd" Research Center (hereinafter referred to as the Center) of the Armenian State University of Economics (hereinafter referred to as the University).
2. The current procedure **aims to:**

- establish mechanisms for the formation, discussion and approval of the Center's current research topics,
- ensure the priority of approving research topics of scientific and practical interest for external and internal beneficiaries and the applicability of research conducted at the Center,
- integrate the Center's research results in the educational process,
- introduce transparent mechanisms for announcing competitions, examining applications, evaluating results and forming research groups for the implementation of research topics,
- introduce mechanisms for the involvement of the University's faculty (including part-time employees), postgraduate students and students in research groups,
- introduce procedures for publicizing current research.

### 3. The main concepts used in the procedure.

The concepts used in this procedure have the following meanings:

- **Research areas of specialization** - areas of science where the Center conducts academic or applied research to address short-term, medium-term, or long-term issues and to suggest solutions. The main areas of specialization of the Center are macroeconomic stability, fiscal and monetary policy, external sector, financial markets and institutions, competitiveness, markets, competition, prices and inflation, public policy, business, administration, educational process and educational technologies, as well as other interdisciplinary studies of interest for economic development.
- **Research direction** - the applied and academic research works conducted in the Center, which are regularly carried out within the area of specialization of the Center. Research directions are subject to review depending on the urgency of the issue and its importance for economic development.

- **Research topic** - the issue or a certain scope of issues defined within the framework of one or more research directions, the study and solution of which require appropriate research, analysis or elaboration.
- **Research related technical tasks** - the requirements for expected results of the research, research deadline, methodology, object, sample, toolkit, accountability, publication containing the main results of the research (content, volume, structure, etc.), the language, abstracts describing the main results (content, volume, structure, etc.), methods of publication of the results (including publication in international peer-reviewed journals), interim and final discussions of the results, as well as the academic conduct which are defined in the invitation to the competition and are regulated by the Center.
- **Grant competition** - the process of receiving and discussing grant applications from groups of potential research performers and selecting performers for the research in compliance with the approved criteria, in order to involve the University's faculty (including part-time employees), postgraduate students and students as performers on a competitive basis and provide financial support to carry out a certain research topic in a timely manner, including the technical tasks.
- **Research group** - a group of performers consisting of the University's faculty (including part-time employees), postgraduate students and students in a certain proportion. The Center's personnel can also be included in the group on a voluntary basis.

The research group can also be formed by the Center's personnel through the involvement of students and postgraduate students on a competitive basis. The members of such a research group are exclusively University students and graduate students supervised by the Center's personnel.

For the purposes of this Procedure, the term "postgraduate" includes PhD students enrolled in the University (hereinafter referred to as postgraduate students), and the term "student" includes students in the third or fourth year of study (hereinafter referred to as students).

## II. RESEARCH TOPIC DEFINITION

4. The Center's research topics are considered to be components of its research specialization and based on their field affiliation may be included in one of the Center's research directions.

5. The Center's research topics are of practical importance, and the results provided by their implementation should have potential beneficiaries. The scope of potential beneficiaries is determined on the basis of their statutory functions, activities, goals and objectives.

6. Research topics are developed by the Center's personnel as a result of consultations with external and internal beneficiaries or the involvement of research grants and orders by the Center.

7. In order to formulate the annual program of research topics and clarify the budget and calendar plan, the Center's personnel conducts discussions to identify the research needs of external and internal beneficiaries, and based on the discussion results they form the list of proposed research topics, justifications for their urgency, drafts of technical tasks related to implementation, content, publication and publicity, and submit to the Center's Expert Council (hereinafter referred to as the Expert Council) for approval. Meetings of the Expert Council convened to approve research topics are public.

The clarification of research topics with external beneficiaries is done according to the following structure:

- the University addresses the external beneficiaries by presenting the envisaged directions of research, asking to offer topics in line with the mentioned research directions, within the framework of their goals, tasks and functions,
- bilateral discussions are held with the external beneficiaries on the proposed topics, and the topics agreed upon as a result of the discussions are submitted to the Expert Council for approval.

Bilateral or multilateral agreements, treaties and memoranda, as well as jointly organized "round tables" and workshops are also platforms for cooperation with external beneficiaries.

8. The research topics approved by the Expert Council are discussed in the Scientific-Methodological Committee of the University and approved by the Scientific Council of the University (hereinafter referred to as the Scientific Council).

9. The research topics are carried out according to the approved annual research program and budget and calendar plan.

10. The Center's personnel may conduct research on its own initiative to meet the research needs of the internal beneficiaries of the University or to analyze issues of public interest, without the approval of the Scientific Council, if it does not involve additional performers.

11. In case of winning external grants or receiving research orders during the year, the Center's personnel may develop research topics on their own initiative, and, if necessary, involve additional performers without applying for the Scientific Council's approval.

12. The following are mandatory components of substantiation of research topics submitted to the Scientific Council:

- the urgency of the proposed research topics,
- the purpose of their implementation and the proposed objectives,
- the expected scientific and practical results,
- the detailed description of the expected results' application scope,
- the list of potential beneficiaries of research,
- the results of discussions with beneficiaries of research results to identify their needs,
- the proposed duration and budget of the research,
- the schedule of in-university and public discussions of research results,
- the format of the publication of research results.

13. Research topics are formed for a maximum of one (1) year duration and are subject to change each year.

### **III. FORMATION OF RESEARCH GROUPS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPANTS**

Research group formation pursues the following purposes:

- ensuring the frequency of additional research activities and publications in the specialization area of the Center,
- improving the University faculty's (including part-time employees) research skills by involving them in current research,
- developing the University postgraduate students' and students' research skills through their involvement in research activities,
- integrating research results in the educational process,
- submitting proposals for the solution of any problem(s) of the RA economy to the relevant beneficiary (beneficiaries) through the implementation of applied research,
- increasing the reputation of the University as a research institution by publishing the results of applied research,

15. The Center's research groups consist of performers selected from the University faculty members (including part-time employees), graduate students and students on a competitive basis to carry out research topics included in the Center's annual research program.

16. The Center's research groups may also include final year undergraduate and/or graduate students, who are in the process of taking internships/practicum, without compensation.

17. In co-financed programs, as well as in other exceptional cases, due to the need to involve specialists from other professional fields in the research topic, the research group may also include persons who are not members of the University faculty.

18. The research groups are formed for the performance of the given research topic, and operate until the expiration of the term defined by the topic, after which, according to this procedure, the contractual obligations of the performers

and the client are terminated from the moment the final act of their submission-acceptance is approved.

19. The criteria for involvement in the Center's research groups are:

- the performer must be a representative of the University faculty (including part-time employees),
- the cumulative grade point average of the 3rd and 4th year undergraduate student performer should be higher than 15.1 points, and that of the graduate performer should be higher than 76 points,
- the performer must have an academic degree and at least 3 scientific publications related to the research topic in a national or international peer-reviewed scientific journal within the last 5 years,
- in case of absence of a degree, the performer must have at least 5 scientific publications related to the research topic in a national or international peer-reviewed scientific journal within the last 5 years, except for postgraduate or student performers,
- in co-financed programs, as well as in other exceptional cases, the non-University performer must have work experience in a professional field for which he was included by the head of the research group as a temporary performer to study the field-related issues.

20. Research groups are formed based on 2 (two) principles:

- **A group formed to participate in a grant competition**

When the research group was formed to participate in the grant competition announced by the Center. At least 30% of the members of such a research group are postgraduate students of the University, and the rest are members of the University faculty (including part-time employees).

- **A group formed under the coordination of the Center's personnel**

When the research group was formed by the personnel of the Center through the involvement of students and postgraduate students on a competitive basis. The members of such a research group are exclusively students and postgraduate students of the University, whose current

research topic is supervised by the personnel of the Center without additional remuneration, on a voluntary basis.

21. The personnel of the Center can be included in research groups on a voluntary basis without additional remuneration for research work.

22. Involvement of students and postgraduate students in the groups applying for the Center's grant-based research topic is done by the head of the group.

23. The involvement of students and postgraduate students in the research groups formed under the coordination of the Center's personnel is based on the results of the competition announced by the personnel for selection purposes.

24. The minimum threshold of academic standing defined by point 19 of this procedure, the existing skills, the scope of professional interests and publications (if any) are prerequisites for student involvement. The existing skills, professional interests and publications (if any) are a prerequisite for postgraduate students to be involved.

25. During the reporting period, the University's faculty (including part-time employees), postgraduate students and students involved in the Center's research topics, may not be simultaneously involved in other research topics and groups funded by the University.

26. The functions, responsibilities and rights of the head of the research group and the performers are defined by the service contracts in accordance with the technical task specified in the invitation to competition.

The service contract must mention the penalties provided in this procedure for non-compliance with academic ethics and (or) non-performance or improper performance of obligations.



### **III. RESEARCHING TOPIC FUNDING AND REMUNERATION OF PERFORMERS**

27. The annual budget for funding the University's research capacity development and the Center's research is approved based on the University Development Strategy priorities.

28. The Center's research topics are funded from the annual budget allocated for research funding in the form of a targeted grant.

29. The amount of funding for research topics depends on the degree of coverage of the research object, the need (absence) of fieldwork during the research, the size of the fieldwork sample, the scope of the research, and the expected scientific and practical results.

30. The budget allocated for the implementation of the research topic is distributed by the head of the applicant research group on the following principle:

- remuneration of group members,
- business trip and materials acquisition costs,
- other expenses.

The research group or its member(s) may not receive any other reimbursement from the University for the publication(s) if the costs for the publication of the articles have been reimbursed under the "other expenses" article defined in the estimate.

31. The head of the research group is authorized to independently determine the amount of remuneration of individual performers according to the ranges defined in this procedure.

32. Remuneration differences can be based on:

- the differences in the academic degrees of the performers,
- the complexity of the work being conducted,
- the performer's load (full or part time).

33. The monthly salary of the head of the research group is set at the range of 180,000 - 220,000 AMD (including taxes and other fees).

34. The monthly salary range for a scientific degree holder full-time performer is set at 140,000 - 160,000 AMD (including taxes and other fees).

35. The monthly salary range for a full-time performer with no scientific degree is set at 90,000 - 120,000 AMD (including taxes and other fees).

36. The amount of monthly salary for undergraduate students involved in the research group as performers is set at 60,000 AMD (including taxes and other fees), 70,000 AMD (including taxes and other fees) for graduate students, and 80,000 AMD (including taxes and other fees) for postgraduate students.

The amount of remuneration mentioned in this point is also valid in case of financing the research groups formed under coordination of the Center.

37. The remuneration of the head of the research group and the performers is paid according to the amount of remuneration specified in the service contract concluded with them, on the basis of the approved performance act. The results of the research conducted during the given period are also presented together with the performance act. Performance acts submitted without the results of the research are not subject to approval.

The measures of liability provided by the service contract and the law may be applied to the performer, based on the report of the head of the research group.

The service contract is terminated on the basis of the report of the head of the research group in order to remove a member from the research group without the application of liabilities, paying the appropriate final settlement to the group member. If the head of the research group resigns, the report is submitted by the director of the Center.

The vacancy of the head of the research group can be filled by another member of the group without additional remuneration. The vacancy of a member of the research group may be filled by a person who is not a member of the research group, without remuneration.

After the formation of the research group and signing of the relevant contracts with the performers, in accordance with point 19 of this procedure, in case of non-compliance with the criteria of membership of the research group (loss of status), the service contract continues to be valid until the end of the term defined by the contract.

38. The Center reviews the submitted reports and materials submitted for publication within 15 days, and in case of omissions or deviations from the requirements set by the technical task, gives the group time for correcting the omissions and deviations, which may not exceed 20 working days. Performance acts are signed and the last 15% of the total amount of remuneration is paid after the omissions and deviations are fixed. The final report is approved by the Expert Council.

39. Allocations for business trips, materials acquisition, as well as other expenses mentioned in the application are made within the scope of the amount provided for the research, in case of availability of the necessary accounting documents substantiating the expenses and the report of the director of the Center. The compensation of business trip expenses is carried out in accordance with the legislation.

#### **IV. ORGANIZATION OF RESEARCH TOPIC COMPETITION, ANALYSIS AND FINAL REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS**

40. The competition for grant research topics is organized by the Center by publishing the invitation to the relevant competition.

41. The invitation to competition includes a description of the terms of the competition, a description of the application technical requirements (structure, size, font, language), the technical task of the research topic, information on research dates, publication schedule, format, language, expected results and external research beneficiaries.

42. After the publication of the announcement a deadline of 15-30 days is set for research groups to submit applications for participation in the competition, depending on the complexity of the subject of research, the degree of study and inclusion, as well as the volume of the research. The deadline for application submission is set in the invitation.

43. More than one research group with an elected leader and a staff which meets the requirements set forth in points 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 25 and 26 of this procedure,

as well as the student-postgraduate-faculty ratio defined in point 20, can apply for the competition.

44. The applicant group completes and submits the application form and the documents specified in Appendix N1 in this Procedure to the Center in hard copy and electronically within the timeframe set by the invitation to the competition.

45. The selection of research groups for the implementation of the research topic is done on a competitive basis, as a result of the examination of the packages of documents submitted to the Center by the research group(s).

46. The applications are reviewed and the details of the winning group are published within 15 working days following the application deadline.

47. During the application review the Center involves 3 (three) experts, of which 1 (one) is a representative of the Center's personnel, and 2 (two) are external. Moreover, the examination is carried out by external experts on a paid basis by concluding service contracts.

48. The applications that meet the terms of the competition are submitted to the experts involved in order to carry out an evaluation in accordance with the criteria set out in points 53 and 54 of this Procedure.

49. Applications are submitted to external experts for expert opinion under a code number, without revealing the data of the head of the research group and performers.

50. The applications are evaluated by the experts according to the 10 criteria defined in Appendix 2 of this Procedure.

51. The professional qualification of the group head and performers is evaluated only by the representative of the Center personnel, which makes up to 1/3 of the maximum score on the evaluation scale.

52. Provision of information on the content of the applications and the results of the examination to the third party by the persons organizing and conducting the examination is prohibited.

53. The expert carries out the application evaluation according to the evaluation sheet defined in Appendix N2 of this Procedure, where each of the 10 mentioned

criteria is given a point in the range of 0-5 (with an accuracy of 1.0 point), where 0 is the minimum and 5 is the maximum point.

54. During the examination of the application by the Center representative and external experts, the points in the range of 0-5 are given based on the following methodology:

0 point - the answer is missing or it cannot be determined due to lack of information

1 point - the answer is superficial and vague

2 points - the answer is not enough to form a complete opinion

3 points - the answer generally meets the requirements of the question, but there are significant inconsistencies

4 points - the answer meets the requirements with some reservations, but there are some inconsistencies

5 points - the answer fully meets the requirements of the question and the shortcomings are insignificant.

55. The final evaluation of the application is based on the average of the three expert evaluations.

56. In cases when the scores of two of the three experts differ by more than 50% of the maximum score on the rating scale, the final score of the examination is based on the average of the closer scores of two experts.

57. The results of the examination are approved by the Experts Council with a special protocol, which includes the ranking list of the groups that applied for the competition (according to the applicants' codes) and the code of the group that received the highest point for each research topic.

58. If the final score is less than 50% of the maximum score on the rating scale, the application is rejected.

59. In case of more than one group applying for the same research topic, preference is given to the group that received the highest score according to the results of the examination. In case of equal points, preference is given to the group who received higher scores by external experts.

The member of the Expert Council involved in a group, participates in the voting of the given application with the right of consultative vote.

60. The record of the examination of the applications approved by the Experts Council is submitted by the Chairman of the Experts Council to the Rector of the University.

61. Based on the results of the examination, the Rector of the University decides on the research groups to be funded, approves the list of research topics to be implemented, the list of their supervisors and performers, indicating the amount of money allocated for the implementation of each scientific topic.

62. Relevant service contracts are concluded with the heads and performers of the winning research groups, which are valid until the expiration of the research topic.

63. The functions of the group head and performers are defined in the contracts in accordance with the conditions defined in point 26 of this Procedure.

64. The remuneration and the periodicity of the payment of the group head and the performers is defined in accordance with the conditions defined in points 32-38 of this Procedure, according to the members list submitted in the application.

## **V. CONTROL OVER RESEARCH TOPIC IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINES AND TECHNICAL TASK REQUIREMENTS**

65. The implementation of research topics is to be done within the timeframe defined in the invitation of the competition published by the Center and the application submitted by the group.

66. The implementation of research topics is to be done in accordance with the terms of the technical task defined by the competition invitation, the timetable for the publication of the results and the set format.

67. The implementation of research topics must ensure the expected results of the invitation, as well as the additional results submitted by the group in the application.

68. At the end of the set period, the research group submits to the Center the report of the conducted research and the materials to be published (including the results

provided by the research and summaries in English and Russian of 1/4 of the content of the publication reflecting the results of the research).

69. A research group that does not provide the required minimum results defined in the invitation within the deadline must pay a fine of 25% of the total amount requested in the grant application.

70. Members of research groups that do not provide the mandatory minimum results defined in the invitation are disqualified from participating in any research project funded by the University for the next two reporting years.

71. In exceptional cases, when there is a need to extend the term of the research topic (due to the emergence of new realities and the need to develop new packages of proposals and methodological guarantees for their implementation), the Expert Council may extend the term of the topic for no more than six months without additional payment on the basis of the report of the head of the research group.

72. The coordination of research topics included in the Center's research programs and the ongoing control is carried out by the Center's representative attached to the group.

73. The components of ongoing control over research topics are:

- the timetables set for research process, as well as the interim and final reports on the actual research results, approved by the head of the research group
- the timetables set for organizing in-university and public discussions of research results approved by the head of the research group
- the timetables set for other activities (analytical reviews, publication of scientific articles and other materials) defined by the technical task of the competition and the actual results
- the report of the head of the research group on the implementation of the work assigned to the performers of the topic
- the documentary justifications for other financial expenses envisaged by the research estimate in addition to remuneration
- the report containing the main results for the final publication defined by the technical task of the research and its bilingual abstracts.

74. Once a year the Center's director reports on the progress and results of the implementation of research programs to the Scientific Council.

75. In case of non-performance or improper performance of the research work, as well as violation of the deadlines stipulated in the contract, the members of the research group bear responsibility in accordance with the legislation.



**Appendix N 1**

March 2, 2021, N8-3 resolution of  
the Scientific Council of  
the “Armenian State University of Economics”  
State Non-Commercial Organization

**APPLICATION  
FOR GRANT BASED FUNDING OF RESEARCH TOPICS  
OF  
ARMENIAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA “AMBERD” RESEARCH CENTER**

Submitted on « \_\_\_\_ » \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_

Code: \_\_\_\_\_

(completed at the time of delivery)

**TITLE PAGE**

Application title (no more than 15 words) \_\_\_\_\_

Key words \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant’s full name \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Academic degree \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Research implementation time \_\_\_\_\_

Research group members’ number (including  
the head) \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount of remuneration (including taxes)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Amount of expenses**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Total amount requested**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant's signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

**ASUE "AMBERD" NGO director's signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

« \_\_\_\_ » \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_

- I. RESEARCH TOPIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (1-2 pages)**
- II. RESEARCH TOPIC RELEVANCE (6-8 pages)**
- III. INFORMATIVE AND METHODOLOGICAL BASIS OF RESEARCH**  
(The application must specify the directions of the research, the set of indicators to be analyzed, the set of tools needed for information collection, processing, forecasting and decision making)
- IV. EXPECTED RESEARCH RESULTS (1-2 pages)**
- V. FINAL FORM AND TIMETABLE OF RESEARCH**  
(Description of the research stages, the expected results and the implementation timeframe)

N	Description of the work done in the current and final stages of the research	Expected result	Implementation timeframe
Stage 1			
Stage 2			
Stage 3			
Stage ...			
Final Report			

**I. RESEARCH TOPIC PERFORMERS LIST**

N	Position	Remuneration and social security payments	Number of positions	Total remuneration
1.				
2.				
3.				
...				

## II. RESEARCH TOPIC FINANCIAL ESTIMATE

N	Article name	Funding volumes
1.	Remuneration and social security payments	
2.	Materials and resources	
3.	Business trips	
4.	Other expenses	
	Total	

Research Head

\_\_\_\_\_

(signature)

\_\_\_\_\_

(full name)

« \_\_\_\_ » \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_

## RESEARCH HEAD QUALIFICATION INFORMATION

1. Full name \_\_\_\_\_
2. Birthdate and birthplace \_\_\_\_\_
3. Education (university, specialization)  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Academic degree \_\_\_\_\_
5. Last thesis code, year and place of defense  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Published

- scientific articles (number)
  - monographs (number)
  - patents (number)
6. Title, journal, year, pages of research-related publications in the last five years
    - 1.
    - 2.
    - 3.add as needed
  7. Grants received  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Head signature** \_\_\_\_\_

« \_\_\_\_ » \_\_\_\_\_ **20**\_\_

## PERFORMERS INFORMATION<sup>1</sup>

Full name	
Birthdate and birthplace	
Education (university, specialization)	
Academic degree	
Last thesis code, year and place of defense	
Workplace and position	
Phone number	
Email address	
Title, journal, year, pages of research-related publications in the last five years	
1.	
2.	
3.	

Performer signature \_\_\_\_\_

Head signature \_\_\_\_\_

« \_\_\_\_ » \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_

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<sup>1</sup> To be completed for each performer

**Appendix N 1**

March 2, 2021, N8-3 resolution of  
the Scientific Council of  
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State Non-Commercial Organization

**EVALUATION FORM OF APPLICATION  
FOR GRANT BASED FUNDING OF RESEARCH TOPICS  
OF  
ARMENIAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA “AMBERD” RESEARCH CENTER**

<b>N</b>	<b>Evaluation criteria</b>	<b>Score (point)</b>
1.	Research problem statement and object description	
2.	Research methodology and toolkit	
3.	Practical applicability of the results	
4.	Possibility of integrating the results in the educational process	
5.	Scientific achievements of the group head in this field*	
6.	Scientific achievements of the performers in this field*	
7.	Relevance of the group head’s professional qualification to the topic	
8.	Relevance of the performers’ professional qualification to the topic	
9.	Compliance of the application with the requirements of the competition	
10.	Rationale of the estimate	
	<b>Total</b>	

\*Evaluated exclusively by the experts involved from the ASUE "Amberd" research center personnel.