Proposal for Annual Refereed Research Symposiums with Proceedings at PSU

Upon holding three consecutive rounds of the PSU's Specialized Research Forums in collaboration with PSU's Colleges, the Research and Initiatives Center (RIC) proposes developing the forums to match the university's priority to enhance faculty members' research output in terms of quantity and quality. The proposal suggests turning the forums into refereed research symposiums which only accept submissions upon a rigorous peer-review process to ensure the quality of the research papers and posters. Participation at the symposiums will thus be open for researchers from all Saudi universities and research centers with research quality being the main selection criterion. The proposal to hold refereed symposiums also has the added benefit of issuing refereed proceedings under the supervision of the scientific committees of colleges and in collaboration with international publishers.

Objectives

- Enhance research quality of the symposium presentations
- Encourage participation from around the Kingdom
- Increase symposium attendance by specialists and researchers
- Allow the issuance of refereed symposium proceedings which could fulfill accreditation requirements and support faculty members' promotion efforts
- Allow the publication of symposium proceedings by international publishers which could contribute to the University's visibility and presence at highly ranked databases
- Form international scientific refereeing committees which support the university's direction towards regional and international collaboration

Implementation

Upon the Higher Management's approval, the Research & Translation Center (RTC) will coordinate with all PSU's colleges to prepare for holding refereed specialized symposiums starting Spring 2019. Hence, 6 symposiums will be held as follows:

Computer & Information Sciences	Engineering
Law	English Language Studies
Business Administration	General and Applied Sciences

Three specialized research symposiums will be held every year so that each college will be having its own refereed symposium with proceedings every two years.

During the initial round of implementation (academic years 2018-2019 & 2019-2020), colleges may choose to hold a refereed symposium or the regular non-refereed research forum if they think they need more time to prepare for their first refereed symposium.

The responsibilities of the colleges and the Research and Initiatives Center will be divided as follows:

(1) Steering Committee headed by the Dean of the College and including the chairs/ some members of the Scientific/Program Committee, the Logistics Committee, the Marketing Committee and the symposium Proceedings Committee.

(2) The Scientific/Program Committee will be the responsibility of the colleges. Among its responsibilities will be:
   - Preparing the content for the symposium webpage
   - Issuing the call for papers
   - Overseeing the review process of submissions
   - Communicating acceptance/ rejection notifications to applicants
   - Forming the symposium program including keynote speakers

(3) The Logistics Committee will be the responsibility of the Research and Initiatives Center. Among its responsibilities will be:
   - Coordinating with other university offices/ centers to book venues, handle required printing, promotion and catering, setting a website for PSU Research Symposiums, and welcoming guest speakers
   - Overseeing symposium registration and communicating with all (potential) registrants
   - Issuing certificates, letters and plaques for conference participants
   - Preparing reports for the media on the symposiums
   - Overseeing the implementation of the program with reference to the opening/closing ceremonies, provision of moderators, availability of volunteers, dissemination of conference materials, availability of signs for directions, etc.

(4) The Marketing Committee will be a joined responsibility for the colleges and the Research and Initiatives Center and will be headed by a member nominated by the Research and Initiatives Center. The Committee's main task will be to document, publicize and promote the symposium to increase participation and visibility, and to attract sponsors to contribute to the financial expenses.

(5) The Symposium Proceedings Committee will be a joint responsibility between the colleges and the Research and Initiatives Center, and will be headed by a member nominated by the College Dean. Among its tasks will be:
   - Forming an agreement with a publisher for the proceedings
   - Setting publication guidelines for authors
   - Overseeing the double-blind peer review process of submissions
   - Communicating acceptance/ rejection notifications to applicants
   - Overseeing the publication and promotion of the proceedings

Cost per Symposium

The cost can be divided into three categories:

(1) Logistic arrangements (estimated at 15,000SR per day – Each symposium will last for a maximum of 2 days.)

Publications, catering, publicity and symbolic gifts

(2) Guest speakers (estimated at 30,000SR per symposium)

Travel/accommodation of invited international and national guest speakers

(3) Proceedings publication fees (estimated at 30,000SR per symposium)

Publication fees for peer-reviewed proceedings

It must be noted that the Research and Initiatives Center in collaboration with the colleges will work towards attracting sponsors for the forums. It is also important to note that the Center is continuously collaborating with the research committees within colleges to hold regular non-refereed specialized seminars to allow all faculty members to benefit from an environment conducive and supportive of research throughout the academic year.