



**KEMENTERIAN TENAGA, SAINS, TEKNOLOGI,  
ALAM SEKITAR DAN PERUBAHAN IKLIM**  
MINISTRY OF ENERGY, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE

# **INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION FUND (ICF) GUIDELINE FOR APPLICANTS**

**(25 April 2019)**

**Fund Division**

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## INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION FUND GUIDELINE REVISION

No.	Amendment	Description of Amendment	Effective Date
1.	.	Initial Publication	16 <sup>th</sup> August 2017
2.	5.1 This fund is open to all local researchers, scientists and engineers ....	5.1 This fund is open to all researchers, scientists and engineers ....	15 February 2019
3.	10.2 All variation is subjected to MESTECC's approval. The fund recipient needs to submit an application in writing via RMC to MESTECC for approval <b>3 months</b> before the variations are made.	10.2 All variation is subjected to MESTECC's approval. The fund recipient needs to submit an application in writing via RMC to MESTECC for approval <b>1 month</b> before the variations are made.	26 February 2019
4.	8.5 Items not listed under the scope of funding may be given consideration based on special approval.	Item 8.5 is taken out from the guideline.	7 March 2019
5.	5.8 International Collaborator Information ix. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)	5.8 International Collaborator Information ix. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (except for Agencies/Departments under MESTECC)	25 April 2019

**MESTECC reserves the right to revise the guideline at any time without prior notice.**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The International Collaboration Fund (ICF) is a grant provided by the Government for international joint R&D projects between researchers from Malaysia and other countries. The aim of the fund is to provide a platform for investment in expanding and enhancing research capacity, and increasing collaborative R&D partnership for competitive R&D projects that are innovative, give high impact and can subsequently contribute to the advancement of knowledge and technology development leading to commercialisation.

In encouraging international collaboration on a higher level, we hope to increase Malaysia's international competitiveness through research findings which are able to lead to new technologies while strengthening national research capacity and capability.

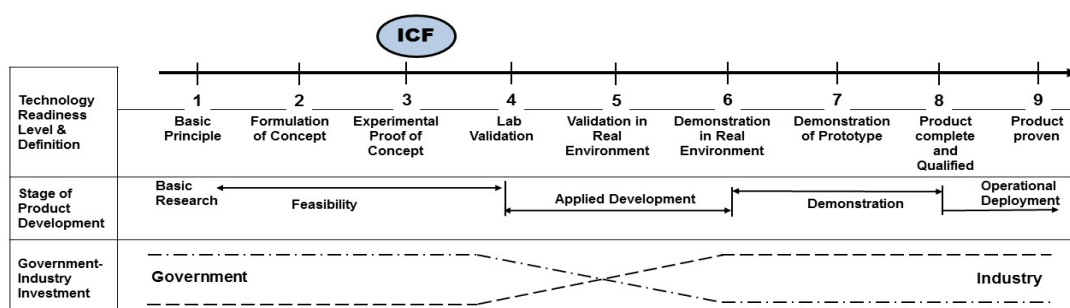
## 2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this fund is to encourage and promote co-operation in science, technology and innovation through joint research and development activities for mutual benefit. This fund is intended to assist applicant to pursue analytical validation and proof of concept on Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 3.

## 3. TECHNOLOGY READINESS LEVEL

Technology Readiness Levels is a method of characterising technological maturity from the most basic research (TRL 1) through to full-scale-real-world operation (TRL 9). The International Collaboration Fund covers TRL3 as shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Scope of International Collaboration Fund Relative to Technology Readiness Level



## 4. RESEARCH AREAS

4.1 The proposed project must be within the framework of the research areas as follows:

- i. Biotechnology
- ii. Engineering and Technology
- iii. Computer Sciences and Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- iv. Medical and Health Sciences
- v. Agriculture and Forestry

The different areas under the divisions are listed in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 Key enablers such as, Internet of Things (IoT), Nanotechnology and Industry 4.0 should be embedded in the areas selected.

## 5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

5.1 This fund is open to all researchers, scientists and engineers who are employed on a permanent or contractual basis from the following organisations in Malaysia:

- i. Government Research Institutions (GRIs);
- ii. Government Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Agencies; and
- iii. Public and Private Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) with accredited research programmes.

5.2 Government STI organisation is a government organisation involved in R&D activities and other services related to STI in Malaysia.

5.3 Researchers can lead only one (1) project at any time and main location of the project must be in Malaysia.

5.4 Researchers working under contract with IHLs, GRIs and STI organisation must ensure that their employment contract is still valid for the project duration.

- 5.5 Proposal may be required to obtain approval from relevant authorities for matters related to National safety, security and other sensitive issues.
- 5.6 Branch Institutions in Malaysia cannot collaborate with the main or branch institutions elsewhere. Collaboration must be with institutions other than their own.
- 5.7 International Collaborator's organisation shall equivalent to applicant organisation as follows:
  - i. Government Research Institutions (GRIs);
  - ii. Government Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Agencies; and
  - iii. Public and Private Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) with accredited research programmes.
- 5.8 International Collaborator Information

The following information shall be included in the application form:

- i. Name of researcher;
- ii. Organisation;
- iii. Country;
- iv. Passport number;
- v. Curriculum Vitae (CV);
- vi. Title of project;
- vii. Allocation amount;
- viii. Duration of project;
- ix. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (except for Agencies/Departments under MESTECC); and
- x. Letter of Acceptance between Applicant and Collaborator detailing respective scope of work.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PROJECT LEADER**

The successful implementation of the project is the responsibility of the project leader. Project leaders have to ensure that the projects are carried out effectively to meet the specified objectives and milestones within the timeframe and funding allocated.

## 7. DURATION AND QUANTUM

- 7.1 The project **duration** is for a maximum of **24 months**.
- 7.2 **Quantum** of funding is a maximum of **RM500,000.00**. Based on approval, the first allocation will be disbursed upon stamping of agreement. Subsequent payment will be disbursed based on progress and expenditure of first allocation that has been spent.

## 8. SCOPE OF FUNDING

- 8.1 ICF covers research leading to laboratory proof of concept, towards the development of new technologies, processes or products. This fund covers the following expenses such as wages, travelling, rentals, materials, modification, services and equipment. Detail scope of funding as described in item 8.4. ICF does not allow **cross border of funding**.
- 8.2 Expenses related to overseas trips for conference including registration fee will be funded not more than RM15,000.00.
- 8.3 Expenses related to work carried out at the international counterpart laboratory will be funded up to a maximum of RM20,000.00. The eligible expenses are as shown in Table 1 according to the latest circular. Please refer to “Pekeliling Perbendaharaan Kadar Dan Syarat Tuntutan Elaun, Kemudahan Dan Bayaran Kepada Pegawai Perkhidmatan Awam Kerana Menjalankan Tugas Rasmi”

Table 1: Detail on the expenses related to overseas trip

<b>Overseas Trip</b>	<b>Present paper</b>	<b>Lab Work</b>
Eligible Person	1 Project leader or co-researcher	
Duration	Not more than 1 weeks	Not more than 2 weeks
Frequency	Once during project duration	
Ceiling Cost V21000+V29000	Not more than RM15,000.00	Not more than RM20,000.00

8.4 The funding can be utilised for the following categories:

i. **V11000: Wages and Allowances for Temporary and Contract Personnel**

- a. Includes wages and allowances for a maximum of two (2) temporary/contract personnel who is directly engaged in the project.
- b. The maximum wages/allowances for a temporary/contract personnel is up to RM2,500 per month/per head inclusive of deductions for SOCSO/EPF. The allocation cannot be used for tuition fees.

ii. **V21000: Travel and Transportation**

- a. Includes travel and transportation expenses for domestic and overseas trips directly related to the project.
- b. Travel is limited to economy class using the shortest direct routes by either MAS or Air Asia except under extenuating circumstances.
- c. The allocation for travelling overseas must be budgeted for in the research proposal.
- d. Overseas trips must meet the following criteria:

Lab work

- Where domestic facilities and expertise are inadequate locally, the team leader or member (not research students) can conduct a portion of the research at their counterpart's laboratory overseas. However, the venue must be suitable in terms of facilities, expertise and technology transfer. This must be indicated in the application form and the budget must include air fare, accommodation, food and transportation.
- Lab work detail and activities must be made early the project.



- The project leader or co-researcher is only allowed to go once for the duration of the project.
- The project leader needs to get approval from MESTECC in writing and submit detail of lab work plan.

#### Conferences/seminars

- For oral presentation of papers only at conferences/seminars on the findings of the project but every effort must be made early on to protect any IP that may be derived from the project.
- The project leader or co-researcher is only allowed to go once for the duration of the project.
- The progress of project must be more than 50% before applying to attend the conference and within original project timeline.
- The project leader needs to get approval from MESTECC in writing and submit a copy of the acceptance letter from the organiser, abstract of the paper and detail of expenses required.
- The project leader must also submit a copy of the full paper presented after the conference.

#### iii. **V24000: Rentals**

Rental for space, equipment, transportation and any other items directly related to the project can be included.

#### iv. **V26000: Research Materials and Supplies**

Expenses supported are for research materials and supplies directly related to the project. Please provide details of items required in terms of quantity and cost. The grant will not support payments for utilities (including broadband), books, stationeries and subscription to journals etc.

v. **V28000: Minor Modifications and Repairs**

- a. Only expenses for minor modifications and repairs of laboratory, equipment or any other items directly related to the project can be included.
- b. The maintenance costs of existing equipment used during the duration of project period can also be included.
- c. The cost of maintenance of any equipment purchased will not be borne by the ICF after the project is completed.

vi. **V29000: Special Services**

All services under this category must be itemized and is only for services directly related to the project as follows:

- a. Payment for enumerators
- b. Honorarium for subjects and experts
- c. Sample testing and analysis
- d. Data processing
- e. Patent registration in Malaysia, excluding maintenance cost
- f. IP incentives for patent and industrial design only
- g. Fees related to paper publication of the project
- h. Registration fee for conference

vii. **V35000: R&D Equipment and Accessories**

- a. Justification for purchase of specialised equipment must be given. Project leader will need to provide information on the availability of such equipment and why it cannot be used or shared.
- b. Accessories are items that are necessary to upgrade the capability of existing equipment directly related to the project.

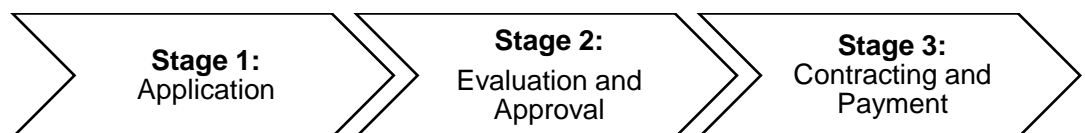
- c. Purchasing of equipment must be made in the first year.
- d. Researchers are encouraged to share R&D equipment and avoid purchasing of the same R&D equipment within the same research institutions.
- e. Funding for specialised equipment and accessories cannot be more than 40% of the total project expenses. Applicants need to provide an itemized list along with the justifications, specifications, quotations and estimated costs for such purchases.
- f. Purchasing of personal computers, data logging, workstation, laptops, printers, servers, hosting, toners and scanners are not allowed.

#### 8.5 Non-Qualifying Project Activities

Scientific and technical information services such as collecting, coding, recording, classifying, disseminating, translating, analysing, evaluating, bibliographic services, scientific and technical information extension advisory services and compilation of data are excluded from the main activities of the project except when they form an integral part of the project. In such a case, applicants must provide a statement indicating the research objectives to which the data would contribute.

### 9. APPLICATION PROCESS

9.1 There are three (3) stages to the International Collaboration Fund application as shown below:



9.2 **Stage 1: Application** process are as follows:

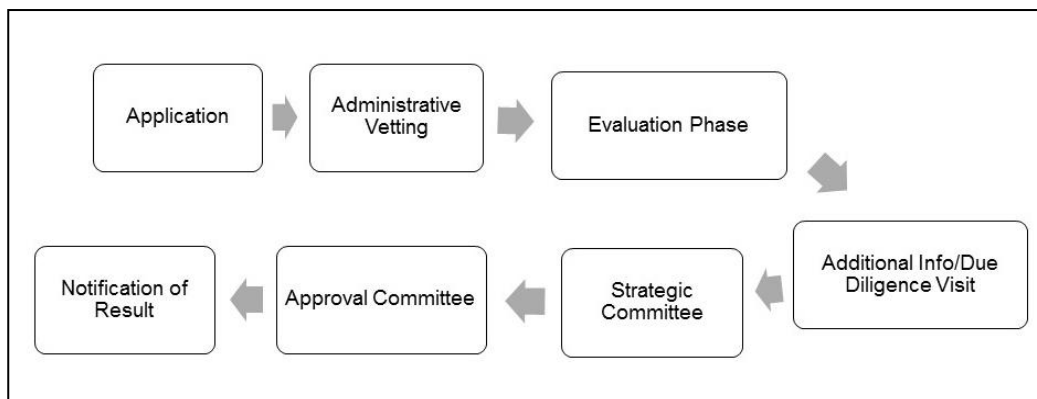
- i. The application starts with **submission of the full paper proposal**.

- ii. Full proposal must be submitted through the online system at <https://edana.mestecc.gov.my>. Applicants and collaborators must provide document as listed in **Appendix 2**.
- iii. All applications must be reviewed and approved by the Head of the applicant's organisation or the Research Management Centre (RMC) of the institution. They should also declare that the proposed research has not been funded or submitted for funding to any other source. Failure to do so would cause the application to be rejected.
- iv. The proposal submitted will then be vetted by the Secretariat to ascertain whether the application and documents submitted fulfil the basic requirement. Incomplete or non-eligible proposal will be returned to the applicant.

9.3 **Stage 2: Evaluation** process is as follows:

- i. The complete paper will be **reviewed** by the Fund Expert Committee (**FEC**) for elements of their commercial potential and technical aspect.
- ii. **Applicants** will be invited to **present (pitch)** their full paper proposal to the FEC. The applicant may be required to amend or revise the full paper to improve the proposal. In some instances, a **due diligence may be required** to be conducted after the evaluation process for verification purposes.
- iii. Once the due diligence has been carried out, **results** will be **assessed** by the Strategic Committee before presenting to the **Approval Committee**.
- iv. All applicants shall be notified officially via eDANA system or email. The successful applicants shall accept or decline the offer via eDANA system or email. Decisions made by the Approval Committee is **FINAL** and **any appeal on the results will not be entertained**.
- v. The overall application and evaluation process including notification of the results will take **60 days** after all responses and information have been received from the applicant. The application process work flow is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Application Process Work Flow



9.4 **Stage 3: Contracting and Payment Process** are as follows:

- i. Fund recipients are required to submit letter of acceptance upon receiving the offer letter from MESTECC. Heads of the fund recipient companies or the Research Management Centres (RMC) of the institutions are required to sign the Project Agreement and submit bank statement information.
- ii. The signed agreement will then be signed by MESTECC's top management and the agreement will be sent back to the fund recipient for stamping.
- iii. The activities of 9.4.1 and 9.4.2 are expected to be completed within **30 days**. Once the Secretariat has received the stamped agreement, the first payment to the fund recipient will be processed.

## 10. PROJECT MONITORING

10.1 All projects must be conducted in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in the ICF Agreement. The project will be closely monitored to ensure that they are carried out successfully. Researchers are required to submit the following reports through the RMC:

- i. **Progress Report (PR)** must be submitted before 31 January and 31 July each year. These reports will be used to monitor the progress of the project as well as determine the timing of the fund disbursements. This will take into account milestones achieved as well as 50% expenditure of the amount already disbursed. It is the project leader's responsibility to ensure that the

correct and updated information related to the milestone achievement and expenditure are reported. Failure to submit the Progress Report is a serious omission that will result in the withholding of further fund disbursement or possible termination of project. The report can also be used to apply for changes in timeline for milestone achievement and project schedule.

- ii. **End of Project Report (EPR)** should be submitted within three (3) months after project completion. All publications must acknowledge MESTECC's contribution as a fund provider. The End of Project Report requires the following information:
  - a. Direct outputs of the project
  - b. Extent of achievement of the original project objectives
  - c. Technology transfer and commercialisation approach
  - d. Benefits of the project, particularly project outputs and organisational outcomes
  - e. Assessment of the project team, research approach, project schedule and project costs
  - f. Sectoral/national impacts of the project
  - g. Technical Report of the project

**Note:** The outcome of research under ICF that has commercial potential can be considered for additional funding under the Pre-Commercialisation funding category.

- iii. MESTECC reserves the right to request for periodic information on the progress or to invite for seminar presentation and exhibition or to conduct site visits even after the project has been completed.

10.2 All variation is subjected to MESTECC's approval. The fund recipient needs to **submit an application in writing via RMC to MESTECC for approval 1 months before the variations are made.**

- i. **Virement** can only be done **once** throughout the project duration. Requests for virement to purchase new equipment in the last six months of the grant's duration will not be entertained.

- ii. Under certain circumstances, MESTECC may allow for extension of project duration without additional funding. Applications received after the project completion date, will not be considered. The maximum **extension** given is up to **6 months** including the submission of the End of Project Report.
- iii. If a project leader resigns, retires or moves to another organisation, RMC must immediately seek MESTECC's approval for a suitable replacement within the same institute. RMC must ensure that the new project leader has the relevant expertise and experience to continue the project to completion. Failing this, the institution may opt to terminate the project and write in to MESTECC.

### 10.3 Publications

Researchers are encouraged to publish the results of their projects in local and renowned international publications only after all measures have been taken to protect any IPR generated from these projects. The contribution of MESTECC as the fund provider must be acknowledged at all times in all forms of publications.

### 10.4 Quarterly Financial Report

RMC is required to submit to MESTECC a Quarterly Financial Report of all approved projects in digital file (excel format) as shown in Appendix 4.

### 10.5 Transfer of Grants Between Organisations

The transfer of projects from one institution to another is **not allowed** as it can be quite problematic in terms of long delays to the project timeline related to the financial transfer, changes to agreement and team members, and getting the right contract assistants.

## 11. OWNERSHIP AND USE OF R&D EQUIPMENT

All R&D equipment purchased under the grant must be recorded and tagged with the project number for monitoring and verification purposes. The equipment belongs to the fund recipient and the maintenance of the equipment is under the responsibility of the fund recipient once the project has been completed. However, such equipment are not for the sole use of the fund recipient, and must be made available to other research organisations as and when the need arises.

## 12. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

12.1 The end products developed under the International Collaboration Fund are **encouraged to be patented and registered for IP Rights**. The fund recipient has to notify the Secretariat in writing upon the successful registration of the IP.

12.2 The IP rights of the project shall **wholly owned by the recipient** as specified in the International Collaboration Fund Agreement.

12.3 Any provisional activities using the output of the project should acknowledge MESTECC as the fund provider.

## 13. INCENTIVE FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTIES

13.1 The applicant may apply for the following incentives after the project completion, provided the **allocation for the incentive is stated during grant application**:

- i. Incentive for **disclosure** of the Project Intellectual Property: **RM500.00**;
- ii. Incentive for **filing** of patent of the Project Intellectual Property: **RM5,000.00**; and
- iii. Incentive for **granting** of patent Project Intellectual Property: **RM10,000.00**.

Payment of this incentive shall be on a one-off basis.

13.2 The organisation shall set aside and pay:



- i. The incentive for disclosure of the Project Intellectual Property upon disclosure of the Project Intellectual Property;
- ii. The incentive for filing of patent of the Project Intellectual Property upon receipt of the proof of patent filing of the Project Intellectual Property; and
- iii. The incentive for granting of patent Project Intellectual Property upon receipt of the proof of patent granted of the Project Intellectual Property.
- iv. The grant recipient must disclose to MESTECC in writing, of the existence of the Project Intellectual Property not later than 60 days from the Project Completion Date.

## 14. TERMINATION

14.1 MESTECC reserves the right to withdraw the grant in the event of the following:

- i. Any false information provided by the recipient;
- ii. Changes in scope of the project without the prior written consent of MESTECC;
- iii. Change of project leader without the prior written consent of MESTECC;
- iv. Any misuse of grants;
- v. Achievement / progress are not as specified in the Agreement of the Fund; and
- vi. Any breach of the agreement.

14.2 Upon termination by MESTECC, recipients are required to pay back the amount of fund that has been disbursed;

14.3 MESTECC reserves the right, at any time, to review, suspend or withdraw approval of any grant or payment if such measures are deemed necessary; and

14.4 MESTECC reserves the right to make a claim against the recipient for any losses incurred as a result of any default by the recipient as specified in the agreement.

## **15. EXPENDITURE STATEMENTS AND UNEXPENDED GRANT**

15.1 MESTECC reserves the right to request the grant recipient to submit a statement of expenditure at any time during the course of a grant, or to provide supplementary information in support of an interim or final expenditure statement.

15.2 The fund recipient must return the unexpended grant (disbursement mode) to MESTECC **within three (3) months after the completion of the project. For terminated projects, fund recipient shall return the unexpended amount disbursed to MESTECC within one (1) month from date of termination notice.**

## **16. MALAYSIAN CODE OF RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT IN RESEARCH**

Everyone involved in the project shall comply with the principles and practices as stated in the Malaysian Code of Responsible Conduct in Research.

**Appendix 1**

**RESEARCH DIVISION AND CATEGORY**

<b>NO.</b>	<b>DIVISION DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>CATEGORY DESCRIPTION</b>
1.	Biotechnology	Biotechnology
2.	Agriculture And Forestry	Agricultural Science And Technology
		Forestry Sciences and Technology
3.	Engineering And Technology	Applied Sciences And Technologies
		Engineering and Technology
4.	Information, Computer And Communication Technology (ICT)	Information, Computer And Communications Technology (ICT)
5.	Medical and Health Sciences	Medical and Health Sciences

**Appendix 2**

**LIST OF DOCUMENT**

<b>IHL / GRI / STI organisation</b>	<b>Type Copy</b>	<b>Mode submission</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Collaborator (if applicable)</b>
Signed ICF Fund Form with declaration Witnessed by Commissioner of Oath (1 copy)	Hardcopy	Send to MESTECC	√	
Work permit for foreign project leader/ team members / appointment letter	Softcopy	Upload in edana	√	√
Detailed Curriculum Vitae of project team	Softcopy	Upload in edana	√	√
Insolvency Search	Softcopy	Upload in edana	√	√
Contract Agreement/ Letter Of Acceptance between Entity and Collaborator	Softcopy	Upload in edana	√	
Contract Agreement/ Letter Of Acceptance between Entity and Consultants	Softcopy	Upload in edana	√	
Ethical approval / IBC Approval or notification (if applicable)	Softcopy	Upload in edana	√	
One quotation for each equipment and service listed to be purchased	Softcopy	Upload in edana	√	

If the application involved collaborators from local companies, please provide the following document:

<b>Companies</b>	<b>Type of Documents</b>	<b>Mode of submission</b>
Latest SSM Search (Corporate Information from MyDATA portal)	Softcopy	Upload in edana
EPF statement for company	Softcopy	Upload in edana
Work permit for foreign team members / appointment letter	Softcopy	Upload in edana
Latest audited Financial Report (annual turnover, profit and loss statement, balance sheet, cash flow, etc)	Softcopy	Upload in edana
Detailed Curriculum Vitae of Collaborators	Softcopy	Upload in edana
Insolvency Search of Collaborators	Softcopy	Upload in edana

**Appendix 3**

**INFORMATION ON USE OF BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND ASSOCIATED TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE (IF RELATED)**

1. Were biological resources or traditional knowledge associated with biological resources or information relating thereto utilised in the invention applied for.

Yes  No

2. If yes, provide details:

- i. Country :
- ii. State :
- iii. Permit date :
- iv. Benefit sharing agreement date:

A certified copy of the permit accompanies this form.

3. Date of notification of this application for a patent to the National Competent Authority under the Access to Biological Resources and Benefit Sharing Act 2016.

A certified true copy of the receipt of the notification accompanies this form.

**INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION FUND (ICF) QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT**

**INSTITUTION :**

**QUARTER :**

No.	Project No.	Project Title	Project Leader	Project Duration		Project Status (Completed/ On-Going/ Extension)	Total Amount Approved (RM)	Total Amount Received (RM)  A	V-Series						Total Actual Expenditure (RM)  B	% Total Actual Expenditure  (B/A)*100	Committed Expenditure (RM)  C	Committed Expenditure + Total Actual Expenditure (RM)  D = (B + C)	Balance (RM)  E = A-D
				Start	End				V11000	V21000	V24000	V26000	V28000	V29000					
<b>Total (Rm)</b>																			