

## Belmont Forum Collaborative Research Action on Towards Sustainability of Soils and Groundwater for Society

**COUNTRY: Qatar**  
**QNRF – Qatar National Research Fund**

QNRF is participating in Belmont Forum 2020 Collaborative Research Action *on Towards Sustainability of Soils and Groundwater for Society*.

If applicants have any questions about their eligibility, they are advised to contact QNRF to enquire about their eligibility for the call before developing the proposal.

Consortium’s Lead Principal Investigator (LPI) (or the Consortium Lead PI organization where appropriate) must submit an application to this call through the electronic proposal system accessible through <https://www.bfgo.org>, in compliance with the mentioned timeline. Moreover, all proposals involving Qatar-based research teams must also be submitted to QNRF by their relevant Qatar-based LPIs on <https://oss.qgrants.org/> in compliance with QNRF timeline mentioned below using the application form generated after the submission by the consortium LPI.

Qatar-based researchers are requested to comply with the QNRF requirements/eligibilities as provided in this document. Key components of eligibility and national funding modalities are summarized as follows:

- Only institutions inside Qatar with an approved Research Office (RO) are eligible to submit proposals.
- Research Applicants shall be residents of Qatar.
- Full proposals must be submitted by the Qatar-based LPIs through QNRF submission channel on (<https://oss.qgrants.org/>). They will also have to be vetted by the Submitting Institution Research Office (RO).
- Recipients of funding by QNRF (institutions and individuals) should comply with the Qatar Foundation (QF) IP policy.
- QNRF retains exclusive rights to make final award decision for QNRF funds.

### 1. Eligibility

#### 1.1. Eligibility of Institutions

- 1.1.1. Only Institutions inside Qatar with approved Research Offices (ROs) are eligible to submit proposals. To be approved, ROs located inside Qatar may register any time at <https://www.qgrants.org/>.
- 1.1.2. In case of two or more institutions from Qatar taking part in a proposal, one of them will be designated as “Submitting Institution.” The rest will be designated as “Collaborative Institutions.” See [link](#) for definitions.
- 1.1.3. Once a proposal is awarded, QNRF will sign the Master Research Funding Agreement (MRFA) with the Submitting Institution. See [link](#) for definitions.

#### 1.2. Eligibility of Proposals

- 1.2.1. The submitted proposal should be aligned with one or more specific research themes of this call indicated in Appendix I.
- 1.2.2. The Qatar-based partners’ contribution(s) to the submitted proposal will be subjected to screening by QNRF to the thematic alignment as in **Appendix II**. If the Qatar-based partners’ contribution(s) fail to justify alignment with specific research themes as in Appendix II of this call, the proposal will be screened out. Therefore, QNRF recommends to Qatar-based applicants to strongly adhere with the

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alignment of their proposals to the specific research themes as indicated in Appendix II of this call to avoid disqualification.

- 1.2.3. The funding by QNRF should be fully allocated to the Qatar-based partners of the proposal. Hence, 100% of QNRF's total annual budget and effort of the proposal should be expended inside Qatar.

### **1.3. Eligibility of Participants**

- 1.3.1. The Lead Principal Investigator (LPI) must be affiliated with an approved institution inside Qatar. See [link](#) for definitions.
- 1.3.2. The Applicant must be a resident of Qatar.
- 1.3.3. The LPI must hold a research-oriented doctorate or any of the approved terminal degrees as defined under the approved list of terminal degrees available at [link](#).
- 1.3.4. The LPI should have at least five single- or co-authored peer-reviewed publications uploaded in their profile on the QNRF online submission system. Types of publications accepted by QNRF include journal papers, full paper conference proceedings, books, book chapters, or patents by the LPI. In addition, QNRF accepts peer-reviewed creative works that cover the following research areas: performing arts, visual arts, creative writing, design works, and communication media. These creative works are only accepted when the LPI provides an 'attestation letter' from the LPI's affiliated institution, indicating that these particular creative works are acceptable research outcomes.
- 1.3.5. The LPI from a research end-user entity may not hold a terminal degree, but they must have a track record in managing technology development projects and/or research projects, and a minimum of five peer reviewed publications, technical reports, or authored patent applications/patents.
- 1.3.6. The Principal Investigator (PI) must be affiliated with a Submitting Institution or a Collaborative Institution inside Qatar. An eligible PI must hold at least a university post-graduate degree and should have a suitable research experience relevant to the area of the proposal and the tasks assigned to him/her.
- 1.3.7. Post-doctoral scholars, graduate students (GS), research associates, research assistants, and undergraduate students from submitting and/or collaborative institutions, are considered Research Team members (for any other unlisted role, the nearest applicable role should be chosen).
- 1.3.8. A post-doctoral scholar is not eligible to act as an LPI or PI.
- 1.3.9. A GS is eligible to participate in a project provided that they are enrolled in a higher education degree program at the submitting or collaborating institution in Qatar and that the research activities are related to the GS's degree program.
- 1.3.10. If necessary, the project may include undergraduate students as Research Team members under the 'Undergraduate Student' roles on the online submission website, provided that their participation would comply with their institution's policies. Each undergraduate student should not participate for more than 16 hours per week in the awarded project activities.
- 1.3.11. Authorized Research Office representatives and other members of the Research Offices are not eligible to participate as research team members in the proposed project.
- 1.3.12. LPIs are expected to optimize the services of their own institution to the maximum extent possible in managing and performing the project's effort. If the need for consultant services is anticipated, the nature of the proposed consultant services must be justified and included in the proposal.

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### 1.4. Number of Roles

- 1.4.1. The count of individual participation in this call as Key Investigators (LPs or PIs) is unlimited providing that the participant research effort complies with the relevant institutional policies.

## 2. Funding modalities

### Grant

Each award is up to US\$ 250,000 per year and for up to three years.

### 2.1. Grant and Effort Allocation

In compliance with the Belmont Forum rules, the QNRF fund will be fully allocated to the Qatar-based partners of the proposal. Hence, 100% of the QNRF total annual grant of the proposal should be expended inside Qatar. In terms of effort, 100% of the proposed funded research efforts must be conducted inside Qatar by the research team

### 2.2. Co-Funding Rules

QNRF encourages co-funded projects. In such cases, applicants are requested to comply with QNRF's Co-funding Policy at [link](#). No fund match will be provided.

### 2.3. Budget Categories

- 2.3.1. The Budget categories include personnel, capital equipment, consumables, materials, services, travel, miscellaneous, and applicable indirect.
- 2.3.2. Expenses related directly to the performance of the project research activities are indicated as Direct Costs. Direct Cost includes the "Personnel" cost, the "Equipment" cost, the "Travel" cost, and the "Miscellaneous" cost.

### 2.4. Personnel Cost

- 2.4.1. Compensation of the Research Team must be charged towards the research effort exercised by the Team and monitored by their respective institutions in terms of number/percentage of days and daily rates, and in compliance with the relevant institutional policies.
- 2.4.2. Institutions should use grant funds to buy out the Research Team Members' time from other duties, such as teaching or service requirements, as per the policies of their institutions.
- 2.4.3. A Graduate Student (GS) is eligible to receive up to US\$ 40,000 for stipend and tuition per year which should be pro rata to the effort percentage.
- 2.4.4. The budget request should include the anticipated number of GSs at the time of application.
- 2.4.5. GSs and post-doctoral scholars who are awarded tuition from any other QNRF funding programs are not eligible to receive funds from this program.
- 2.4.6. Compensation for an undergraduate student's effort may not exceed US\$15 per hour (i.e. US\$120 per day).
- 2.4.7. Consultant's compensation: A consultant's daily compensation rate cannot exceed US\$750, and the LPI is required to provide justification regarding the effort and cost allocated to the consultant.
- 2.4.8. The private institutions are not eligible to receive Personnel cost from QNRF grants.

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### 2.5. Capital Equipment, Consumable and Material Cost

**2.5.1. Capital Equipment:** defined as items having a useful life of more than one year and a unit acquisition cost of equal or greater than US\$ 5,000, and which is part of the approved budget. QNRF requires the LPI to provide information about the specifications, estimated price, and purpose of the capital equipment to be purchased in the budget justification for the project.

1. Procurement of equipment must be in accordance with the institution's procurement policies and procedures.
2. Equipment funded by QNRF should be labelled as such and properly inventoried.

**2.5.2. Consumables and Materials:** defined as items that are necessary to carry out the project with unit acquisition cost of less than US\$ 5,000. This includes associated materials for running the equipment. QNRF requires the LPI to provide justification about the purchased consumables and materials on QGrants system.

**2.5.3. Services:** including surveys and service contracts costs, such as the purchase of data sets (less than \$5,000), which include data compiled by a third party or acquired through services or surveys, should be allocated under Consumables and Materials. QNRF requires the LPI to provide justification about Services on the QGrants system.

### 2.5.4. Travel Cost

2.5.4.1. All travel costs charged to the grant must comply with QNRF travel policy, which is available at: <http://www.qnrf.org/en-us/Funding/Policies-Rules-and-Regulations/Travel-Policy>.

2.5.4.2. All travel costs for consultants must be paid by the awardee institution and are not reimbursable from the QNRF grant.

2.5.4.3. The travel budget includes the following items:

- Ticket cost.
- Destination country and city.
- Estimated travel duration (including the travel days).
- Per Diem.
- Purpose of the travel and justification. The justification should be aligned to the research project study.

2.5.4.4. The travel cost is not subject to any restriction from the total annual direct budget.

### 2.5.5. Miscellaneous Cost

2.5.5.1. This includes publications, communications, translation, conference fees, and other allowable costs. QNRF provides a list of non-allowable costs at [link](#).

2.5.5.2. The miscellaneous cost is not subject to any restriction from the total annual direct budget.

### 2.5.6. Indirect Cost

2.5.5.1. Indirect cost shall not exceed a total of 20% of the project's annual direct cost.

2.5.5.2. The private institutions are not eligible to receive Indirect Cost from QNRF grants.

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### 3.Submission

#### 3.1. Submission Procedure

- 3.1.1. Consortium's Lead Principal Investigator (LPI) (or the Consortium Lead PI organization where appropriate) should apply in English through the electronic proposal system accessible through <https://www.bfgo.org>, in compliance with the mentioned timeline.
- 3.1.2. All proposals involving Qatar-based research teams must be submitted to QNRF by their relevant Qatar-based LPIs on <https://oss.qgrants.org/> in compliance with the QNRF timeline mentioned below.
- 3.1.3. The Qatar-based LPIs must upload to QNRF [qgrants.org](https://oss.qgrants.org) the same application forms generated from Belmont Forum submission system after being submitted by the consortium LPI.
- 3.1.4. Qatar-based LPIs from a research end-user entity who do not hold a terminal degree should request an approval from QNRF to act as an LPI through the online system.
- 3.1.5. The online application submitted by the Qatar-based LPI must be vetted by the Research Office (RO) of the submitting institution in order to be considered as an official submission to QNRF; RO vetting must be completed in accordance with the timeline (Section 7), and the RO responsibilities at [link](#).
- 2.1.6. If collaborative institutions are involved in the proposal, the LPI should enter the required information for each institution, including uploading an official support letter (available at [link](#)). The collaborative Institution must include at least a PI.
- 2.1.7. In a case of co-funding, the LPI is required to provide justification, the total amount of co-funding, including the expected categories of contributions, and upload a commitment letter from the co-funder(s) signed by an authority of the co-funder(s). The template is available at [link](#).
- 2.1.8. For the more information regarding the online submission, please refer to the Grant Application Guide, at [link](#).

### 4. Proposal Screening

All submitted proposals will be subject to screening by both Belmont Forum partners of the call and QNRF, in compliance with the call requirements designed by the Belmont Forum and the QNRF requirements including the eligibility of participants, budget eligibility, and the alignment of the Qatar-based partners' contribution(s) with the research themes of the call. For more details, please refer to the screening process at [link](#).

### 5. Review Process

- 5.1. The Review process will follow review procedures of the Belmont Forum.
- 5.2. QNRF retains the exclusive right to make the final award decision for QNRF funds.

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<b>Timeline for Sustainability of Soils and Groundwater Call</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Open submission for the consortium LPI to the Belmont Forum channel	Please refer to <a href="#">link</a>
Open submission for the Qatar-based LPIs to QNRF channel as well as RO vetting* process.	<b>Monday, 13 April 2020, 12:00pm (Doha time)</b>
Close Proposal Registration by the consortium LPI with the Belmont Forum	<b>Thursday, 23 July 2020 13:59 (UTC)</b>
Close proposal submission to Belmont Forum submission channel	<b>Monday, 24 August 2020, 13:59 (UTC)</b>
Close proposal submission by the Qatar-based LPI and RO vetting to QNRF	<b>Tuesday, 25 August 2020, 12:00pm (Doha time)</b>
Ineligible proposals notification	<b>September/October 2020</b>
Successful proposals notification, awards announcement	<b>Early 2021</b>

**\*RO vetting can only start once the proposal is submitted.**

### 6. Research Ethics and Regulatory Requirements

The proposed research must meet all the applicable requirements of Ministry of Public Health’s policies for the protection of human subjects from research risks and data and safety monitoring (when applicable). Please refer to the Research Ethics and Regulatory Requirements document available at [link](#).

### 7. Research Integrity

For further information regarding research integrity and other related policies, please see the Research Ethics Guide (REG) at [link](#).

### 8. Pre-Funding

- 7.1. Awarded proposals will go through a pre-funding stage, which starts after the award announcement. During pre-funding, the submitting institution will be notified about the requirements (possible budget reduction, budget details, timeline changes, etc.) based on the recommendations made during the review process. In this case, the timeline and the budget submitted will be made available for the LPI to modify them accordingly.
- 7.2. During the pre-funding phase, the LPI submit the required documents including IRB/IACUC/IBC approval(s) as well as entering the start/end dates in QGrants for the required approvals whenever applicable
- 7.3. During the pre-funding phase, the LPI should submit the data management plan as per the Data Management Policy available at [link](#).
- 7.4. See more information on the pre-funding stage in the “Institutions Responsibilities and Post Award” document available at [link](#).

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### 9. Fund Management

For funded proposals, grants will be managed as per the terms and conditions set forth in the Master Research Funding Agreement (MRFA).

### 10. Compliance with Applicable Law and Policies

QNRF, or its duly authorized representatives, shall have the right to conduct audits of any Project, ascertain the extent of compliance of the Awardee with all policies relevant to the implementation of a Project, including those set by Qatar, those set by the Awardee and those set by QNRF, and access facilities where research activities are being/were performed, and view all documents which may include invoices and Research Team Members' timesheets inside and outside Qatar, payroll documents as applicable, Materials, Capital Equipment or Supplies purchased, ethical compliance documents including protocols, and consent forms as applicable or such other documentation submitted by the Awardee and accepted for the purposes of verifying such expense as per the MRFA.

### 11. Reporting

Awardees shall comply with both the monitoring procedures of Belmont Forum and QNRF as indicated in the MRFA.

### 12. Intellectual Property Policy

QF IP policy will apply on QNRF awardees. For more information, please visit: <http://www.qnrf.org/en-us/Funding/IP-Policy>.

### 13. Data Management Plan Policy

This policy supports the development of a robust environment for the sustainable management, use, and reuse of QNRF-funded research data in collaboration with Qatar National Library (QNL).

QNRF recognizes the importance of data management to protect its investment in research and development by ensuring that research data are findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable (FAIR) which will:

- 1) Expedite the scientific process;
- 2) Reduce duplication of effort;
- 3) Support reproducibility and research integrity;
- 4) Optimize availability and reuse of research outputs; and
- 5) Facilitate the preservation of the scholarly record of Qatar.

Qatar-based LPIs of the awarded projects should submit the data management plan during the pre-funding phase according to the templates that will be available on QNRF website. The Data Management Plan Policy is available at [link](#).

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### 14. Research Support Resources

This section describes various research support resources available within QNRF and inside Qatar. For more details, please refer to the “Research Support Resources” at [link](#). These resources include, but are not limited to:

- Asset management (for available equipment)
- QNRF Researcher Network (QRN)
- QNRF awarded projects



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### Appendix I: Research Themes of the Sustainability of Soils and Groundwater Call

QNRF requests Qatar-based researchers to ensure their proposals are aligned with at least one of the themes mentioned below, which are based on the themes indicated in the call text on the [link](#);

- Human activities and soil sustainability.
- Impact of Climate change on land use in Qatar.
- Salinization of soils and groundwater (coastal saline intrusion, brackish, desalination, etc).
- Soil pollution, degradation and loss of ecosystem.

#### For more information, please contact:

**Administrative enquiries:** Dr. Sadim Jawhar, Joint Funding Program Manager,  
<http://support.qnrf.org/index.php?/Tickets/Submit>.

**Scientific enquiries:** Dr. Omar Boukhris, Senior Manager, Energy and Environment,  
<http://support.qnrf.org/index.php?/Tickets/Submit>.