

Research Equipment - Policy & Procedures

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 AUIB possesses a significant array of research equipment.
- 1.2 Proper management of these resources enhances research productivity by:
 - Enabling access and fostering collaborations;
 - Facilitating efficient use of AUIB's financial resources;
 - Ensuring compliance with regulations, thereby safeguarding AUIB's legal and reputational standing.
- 1.3 This policy governs the acquisition, upkeep, testing, compliance with regulations, and disposal of research equipment at AUIB.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all AUIB faculty, staff and researchers involved in the purchase, management, and use of research equipment.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 Equipment - physical assets employed in conducting research in laboratories or field settings. This definition excludes computer software, personal computers, and printers, which are considered office equipment.
- 3.2 Owner - the individual or department responsible for controlling the usage and overseeing the maintenance of the equipment, including adherence to any applicable regulatory requirements.
- 3.3 Regulatory requirements - all legal stipulations related to the maintenance and testing of a specific piece of equipment.
- 3.4 Equipment inventory - database that records details about all research equipment at AUIB.

4.0 Policy

- 4.1 Prioritize the acquisition of research equipment that meets high-quality standards and is suitable for the intended research purposes.
- 4.2 Promote fair and competitive procurement processes, seeking multiple bids and quotes to achieve cost-effectiveness.
- 4.3 Select reputable and reliable vendors or suppliers based on their track record, reputation, and ability to meet research equipment specifications, and deliver them in a timely manner.
- 4.4 Research equipment purchases should align with approved budgets and funding allocations, ensuring responsible financial management.

- 4.5 AUIB recognizes that the correct selection, use, and maintenance of research equipment is essential for high-quality research.
- 4.6 Research equipment purchases at AUIB may only be initiated when the equipment is essential for a research project and is not already available on campus in a reasonably accessible manner.
- 4.7 This policy mandates that all specialized research equipment be shared among researchers to the greatest extent possible. However, such shared usage must not conflict with the sponsor's regulations, the terms of the equipment acquisition, or the specific project for which the equipment was procured.
- 4.8 Research equipment can be categorized into two types based on its transferability to another institution: equipment that can be transferred and equipment that cannot be transferred according to policy.
- 4.8.1 Transferable equipment - equipment may be transferred to another institution along with a relocating faculty member if:
- The equipment was originally brought to AUIB by the faculty member from a previous institution.
 - The equipment was acquired through sponsored research funds or provided directly by the sponsor who is facilitating the transfer.
- 4.9 Ownership of research equipment purchased with grant or contract funds may either remain with the funding agency (sponsor-owned) or be transferred to AUIB (University-owned).
- 4.9.1 In cases where AUIB independently generated funds are used in the purchase of research equipment, such as matching funds, AUIB typically retains ownership. Detailed provisions regarding equipment ownership may also be specified in the property clauses of individual grants and contracts.
- 4.10 Principal investigators or research project leads are accountable for the custody, care, and maintenance of all research equipment obtained through or provided for their grants, contracts, and other agreements.

5.0 Procedures

- 5.1 Principal Investigators or research project leads are tasked with identifying the necessity for research equipment, assessing its availability on campus, and, if necessary, initiating the procurement of new equipment. They are also responsible for ensuring that the equipment under their control is properly used and maintained, and that all regulatory requirements are met.
- 5.2 Deans, department heads, or center chairs, or their appointed delegates, are responsible for ensuring that all research equipment within their respective areas is properly accounted for and utilized to its fullest potential.
- 5.3 The AUIB Research Center will oversee inventory control, maintain a log of all research equipment, and facilitate the shared use of equipment by cataloging available items in its records.

5.4 Purchasing research equipment must adhere to established procurement guidelines, ensuring cost-effectiveness, quality, and suitability for the intended research purposes.

5.4.1 Once research equipment needs have been identified and funds secured, an order will be placed and sent to the department concerned detailing the research project and the need for the equipment requested.

5.4.2 Usually the purchasing department calls for three price quotes. An adequate explanation is required when fewer than three quotes are given or when the lowest bid is not accepted. These documents are processed and forwarded to the accounting department for action.

5.5 The AUIB Research Center maintains a current and accurate inventory listing of all research equipment, with physical inventories conducted at least biannually.

5.5.1 Each piece of equipment will be labeled with a laminated blue paper tag featuring an adhesive backing, which displays the property control number recorded in the inventory log.

5.5.2 Equipment owned by sponsors will also bear a separate red tag indicating it is government property, in addition to the blue paper tag.

5.5.3 These tags are distributed by the AUIB Research Center.

5.5.4 Deans of colleges, department heads, and center chairs (or their delegates) are tasked with reporting significant changes regarding the location, condition, transfer, and disposition of research equipment to the Research Center.

5.6 Maintenance and operational costs for shared research equipment may be divided among colleges and/or researchers based on the extent of use. Such arrangements should be agreed upon in writing by the parties involved, signed by the deans or research group leaders, and submitted to the AUIB Research Center to update the inventory list accordingly.

5.7 Any sponsor-owned research equipment that becomes unserviceable, obsolete, or no longer necessary for the conduct of sponsored research must be reported to the AUIB Research Center.

5.7.1 Procedures for the disposal of such equipment should be established, which may include returning it to the sponsor or negotiating a title transfer to AUIB.

5.7.2 After the termination of a research program, equipment to which AUIB has been granted title should be inventoried as belonging to the relevant college, academic department, or center.

5.7.3 The following steps should be followed for transferring research equipment:

- The faculty member concerned must initiate a transfer request.

- The request should be reviewed by the relevant college/department/center chair, who may approve or deny it based on whether the equipment is needed for ongoing research.
- The AUIB Research Center then assesses the equipment's value and prepares a recommendation considering administrative and financial aspects.
- All approved transfers must be documented, and a copy of the documentation must be filed with the AUIB Research Center to update the inventory details.

5.7.4 Non-transferable equipment - AUIB does not approve transfer requests for research equipment to other educational institutions under the following conditions:

- The equipment was purchased or constructed using AUIB's funds.
- The equipment was acquired with external funds, and AUIB has been vested with title, especially if it is still needed for teaching or research within AUIB.
- The equipment was obtained from government surplus, with title given to AUIB.

Related Policies and Documents

Transfer or Disposal of Equipment Policy

Research Overhead Policy