MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

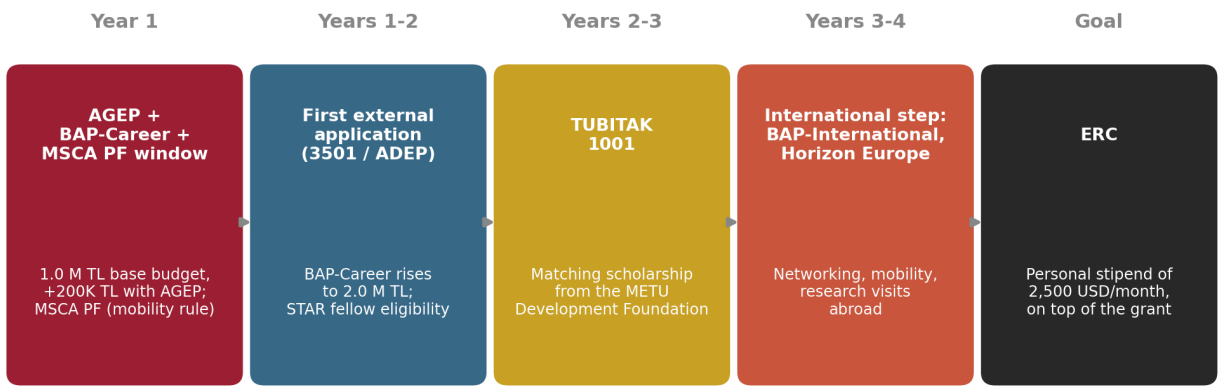
METU START-UP PACKAGE

Research Start-up Support for New Faculty Members

Research Coordination Office, 2026

Welcome to METU. This guide brings together the funding and support available to faculty members who have recently joined the university: internal seed funding, national grants, and the path toward European funding. The aim is simple: **to help you set up your research group quickly and build, step by step, toward larger and internationally competitive projects.**

METU Research Funding Roadmap: From the Start-up Package to the ERC



Each stage builds on the previous one: internal seed funding, then national grants, then international prestige funding

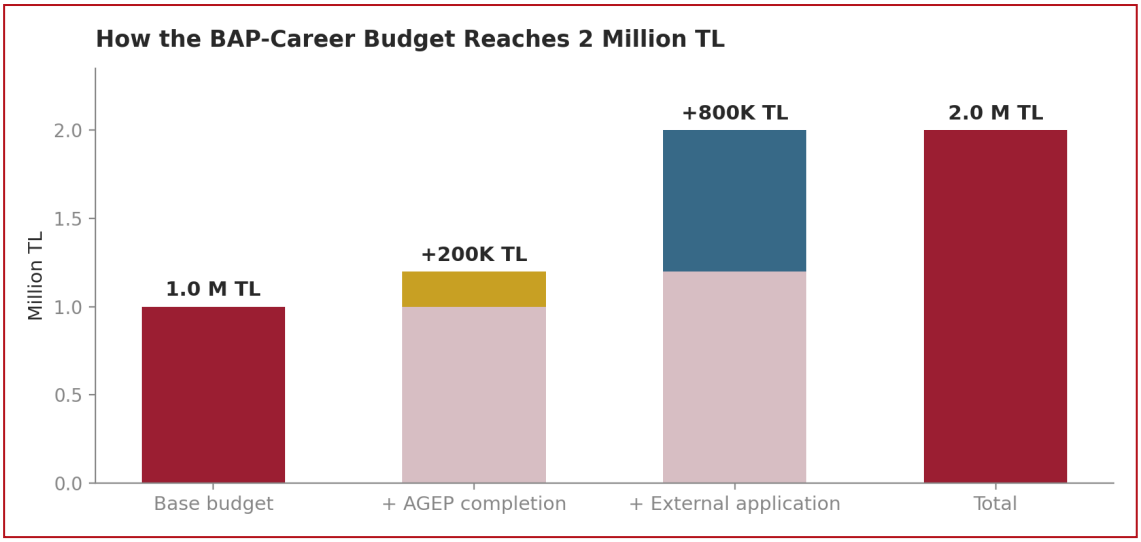
1. First Step: AGEP, the Academic Development Program

Every newly appointed faculty member joins the **Academic Development Program (AGEP)**, an orientation and development program that eases the transition to METU and supports teaching, research and community engagement. The program consists of 11 modules totaling about 50 hours; completing it requires attending at least 80% of the modules and giving a final presentation.

- Module 5, **METU's Research Ecosystem**, introduces the university's research support structures in detail.
- Faculty members who complete AGEP receive **up to 200,000 TL in additional research funding** from the BAP budget. This amount is added to your BAP-Career project budget.
- Details: agep.metu.edu.tr

2. Core Funding: the BAP-Career Project

Faculty members appointed within the last three years who have not yet been promoted to full Professor (as well as instructors who hold a PhD or proficiency in art) can apply for a **BAP-Career** project. The call is **open year-round** and the project duration is 24 months. Our advice to every new colleague is straightforward: **write your BAP-Career project.**



- **Base budget: 1,000,000 TL.**
- **+200,000 TL** on completing AGEP.
- **+800,000 TL:** if, after joining METU, you submit an externally funded project application as principal investigator (TUBITAK, Horizon Europe and similar), the budget can be raised to **2,000,000 TL** in total (a supporting document is required).

What can the budget cover?

- Research visits and travel to scientific meetings,
- Equipment, consumables and services,
- and, most importantly, **student employment.** You can support graduate students as scholarship holders and also hire contracted project staff (monthly salaries cannot be below the minimum wage).

Graduate scholarships: ceilings updated on 25 June 2026

MSc students: up to 12,000 TL per month

PhD students: up to 18,000 TL per month (integrated PhD included)

A project may have at most two scholarship holders at a time. Current figures and contracted staff salary ceilings: bap.metu.edu.tr (announcement: bap.metu.edu.tr/tr/duyurular/bap-bursiyer-ucretleri)

Employing students as project staff: what the budget buys

Beyond scholarships, the BAP-Career budget can be used to employ graduate students as **contracted project staff**. The total monthly cost to the project of one staff member at the minimum wage, that is, gross salary plus employer contributions, is currently about **40,000 TL**. This option is worth serious consideration: the net minimum-wage salary the student receives is **higher than the TUBITAK MSc scholarship and close to the TUBITAK PhD scholarship**, and, unlike a scholarship, the position is formal employment. The student is registered with social security (SGK), accrues insured working time, and the position counts as work experience.

Scenario	Monthly cost	Coverage	Total cost
Two staff members, enhanced budget (2.0 M TL)	80,000 TL	24 months (full project)	1,920,000 TL
Two staff members, base budget (1.0 M TL)	80,000 TL	about 12 months	960,000 TL
One staff member, base budget (1.0 M TL)	40,000 TL	24 months (full project)	960,000 TL

In other words, the enhanced 2,000,000 TL budget can carry two minimum-wage staff positions for the entire 24-month project. Figures are based on the 2026 employer cost of roughly 40,000 TL per month; the minimum wage is revised annually, so multi-year plans should allow for increases. Personnel employment must be foreseen in the approved project plan, and salary ceilings are published at bap.metu.edu.tr.

3. The National Step: TUBITAK Career Program (3501)

While your BAP-Career project is running, you can apply to the **TUBITAK 3501 Career Development Program**, which currently provides around **1,500,000 TL** (please check the current call for the exact limit). This application also counts as the external application that raises your BAP-Career budget to 2,000,000 TL.

4. For TUBITAK Project Holders: the STAR Fellowship

Running a TUBITAK project also lets you host a **STAR fellow**: an undergraduate student funded **directly by TUBITAK for six months**, outside your project budget. It is a good way to bring strong undergraduates into your group early, and a natural pipeline for recruiting future graduate students.

5. High-Budget Calls: ADEP

Calls under the **Research Universities Support Program (ADEP)** of the Council of Higher Education (YOK) open every year. Under the restructured ADEP framework, projects are no longer one-size-fits-all: each application is made to **one of four project types**, and the requested budget and duration must fall within the range of the chosen type.

Type	Project	Budget range	Duration
ADEP-I	Start-up / Pilot Research Project	1.0 to 3.0 M TL	12 to 18 months
ADEP-II	Standard Research Project	3.0 to 5.0 M TL	12 to 24 months
ADEP-III	Large-Scale Research Project	5.0 to 10.0 M TL	24 to 36 months
ADEP-IV	Strategic / Mission-Oriented Research Project	above 10.0 M TL	24 to 36 months

Each type comes with its own minimum team, scholarship holder and output requirements. Projects must be linked to the priority sectors and areas of the **Twelfth Development Plan**; there is no METU-specific thematic priority, so applications are welcome from all fields. A faculty member can be principal investigator of at most one project per call. For new colleagues, **ADEP-I** is the natural entry point, and the budgets are substantial enough to make ADEP well worth considering early in your career.

The call runs in two stages: an internal first stage at METU through BAPSIS, followed by a second stage on YOK's YOKSIS ADEP System for the projects that pass. **For the 2027 call, first-stage applications are expected to be open from 15 October to 15 December 2026 (tentative; please follow the official announcement).** Full conditions are set out in each year's call guide.

6. Thematic National Funders: TUSEB (Health) and SAYE (Social Research)

Beyond TUBITAK and ADEP, two national programs are well worth knowing, and both are open to more disciplines than their names suggest.

TUSEB, the Health Institutes of Turkiye, funds health-related R&D, including engineering, basic sciences, materials and biotechnology work with a health application. Calls are announced every year in several groups of increasing scale, with a two-stage process (pre-application, then full proposal) on the TUSEB application system (TBYS):

- **Group A, small-scale projects:** short projects to start a line of work; the 2026 call for academic staff (A4-A) had an upper limit of 500,000 TL, with separate calls for undergraduate, MSc and PhD students.
- **Group B, product-oriented R&D:** for experienced researchers, with **much higher budgets of several million TL** (for example, up to 3,000,000 TL in the 2026-B2 call).
- **Groups C and D:** strategic and commercialization-stage projects at a far larger scale, requiring a validated prototype (C) or a technology readiness level of 7 (D).

2026 upper limits: files.tuseb.gov.tr/proje-destek/files/diger/2026-ust-limitler-websitesi-icin-2.pdf; calls and guides: proje-destek.tuseb.gov.tr

SAYE, the Social Research and Innovation Institute, is coordinated by Ankara Social Sciences University with the support of the Presidency's Strategy and Budget Office and YOK, under a cooperation protocol of which **METU is a partner**. The SAYE Research Projects Programme supports data-driven, practice-oriented research on societal challenges (population and ageing, family, education, employment, migration, natural disasters, the twin transition and more), including doctoral-level projects. Despite the name, **it is open to all disciplines**, including engineering, natural sciences and health sciences. **The call usually opens in May and runs until mid-June each year;** dates vary from year to year (the 2026 deadline was 31 July), so please check the current call. Details: saye.asbu.edu.tr and pdo.metu.edu.tr/en/node/107

7. After Two Semesters: TUBITAK 1001 and the Matching Scholarship

Once your BAP-Career and 3501/ADEP applications are in, our recommendation is to write a **TUBITAK 1001 proposal within two semesters.** A funded 1001 project brings more than its own budget:

METU Development Foundation matching scholarship

For a graduate scholarship holder employed in your funded 1001 project, the METU Development Foundation pays **a second scholarship equal to the one received from the project.**

The matching scholarship also applies to **international students**, which makes it a strong recruitment tool for attracting good graduate students to your group.

8. The International Gateway: MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship

You can apply for a **Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions Postdoctoral Fellowship (MSCA PF)** with METU as the host institution, provided you have no more than eight years of research experience after your PhD. Timing matters here. Under the MSCA **mobility rule**, you must not have spent more than 12 of the 36 months before the call deadline in Turkiye. In practice, this means the application should be made **before you arrive or within your first year at METU**. For colleagues arriving from abroad, the window typically closes after the first year, so plan early. The Research Coordination Office (pdo@metu.edu.tr) provides proposal preparation support for Horizon Europe, along with travel allowances for networking and proposal-writing events.

9. Research Visits Abroad: BAP-International

If you would like to spend time at a leading university or research institution abroad, the **BAP-International** scheme covers:

- **Up to 2,000 EUR per month** plus a round-trip flight ticket,
- Visits of **30 to 89 days**, scheduled in semester breaks and the summer period; applications must be made at least 4 months before the visit,
- Collaborations with institutions ranked in the top 700 of the THE or QS rankings, overall or by subject,
- **Faculty members who joined METU within the last three years are exempt from the academic performance requirement**, a specific advantage for newcomers. Details are in the BAP Implementation Principles.

10. For Your Students: BAP Graduate Thesis Projects

You can also write **BAP-Thesis** projects for the graduate students you supervise:

- **BAP Thesis-MSc: 150,000 TL**
- **BAP Thesis-PhD: 300,000 TL.** In addition, once the thesis proposal is accepted, PhD students can spend **up to 3 months** at a recognized research institution abroad with a non-refundable grant of **1,500 EUR per month**.

Full conditions for all BAP schemes are set out in the BAP Implementation Principles (bapsis.metu.edu.tr/ASDuyuruDetay.aspx?ID=761) and at bap.metu.edu.tr.

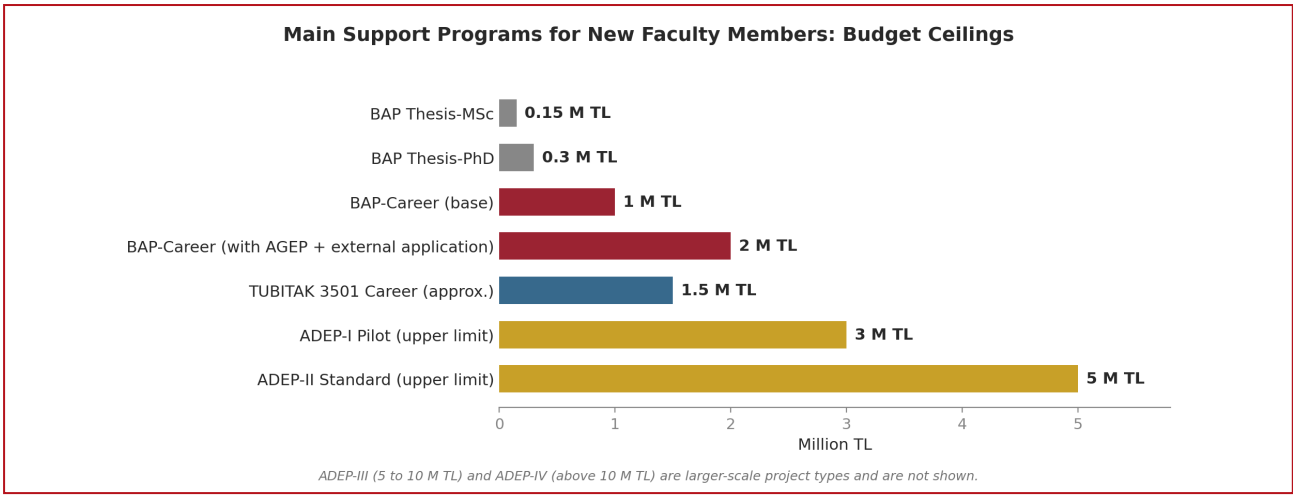
11. The Goal: the ERC

Each step in this package, from internal seed funding through national grants to international mobility and a well-staffed research group, is designed to prepare you for the **European Research Council (ERC)**, Europe's most competitive individual research grant.

For ERC grantees

If you win an ERC grant, the METU Development Foundation pays you a personal stipend of **2,500 USD per month**, on top of the project budget.

At a Glance: the Start-up Package



Support	Who is it for?	Amount / Scope	Call & Source
AGEP top-up	New faculty members who complete AGEP	Up to 200,000 TL, added to BAP-Career	agep.metu.edu.tr
BAP-Career	Appointed in the last 3 years, below full Professor	1.0 M TL base, up to 2.0 M TL with conditions	Open year-round; bap.metu.edu.tr
TUBITAK 3501 Career	Early-career researchers	Approx. 1.5 M TL (see current call)	TUBITAK call periods
STAR fellowship	PIs with an active TUBITAK project	6-month TUBITAK stipend for an undergraduate, outside the budget	TUBITAK STAR
ADEP	Projects in Twelfth Development Plan priority areas (all fields)	Four types: 1.0 to 3.0 M TL (ADEP-I) up to above 10 M TL (ADEP-IV)	Annual call; 2027 call: 15 Oct to 15 Dec 2026 (tentative)
TUSEB	Health-related R&D (all relevant fields)	Group A small-scale (500,000 TL for academics in 2026) to Group B several million TL; C and D far larger	Annual calls; proje-destek.tuseb.gov.tr
SAYE	Societal-challenge research, all disciplines (METU is a partner)	Research and doctoral-level projects	Usually May to mid-June; saye.asbu.edu.tr
1001 + matching scholarship	Scholarship holders in funded 1001 projects	Second scholarship from the Foundation (international students included)	METU Development Foundation
MSCA PF support	Before arrival or within the first year (mobility rule)	Proposal preparation and networking travel support	Teknokent PYDO
BAP-International	Research visits abroad (3-year exemption)	2,000 EUR/month plus flight, 30 to 89 days	bap.metu.edu.tr
BAP Thesis-MSc / PhD	Your graduate thesis students	150,000 TL / 300,000 TL (plus 3 months x 1,500 EUR abroad)	Open year-round; bap.metu.edu.tr
ERC stipend	ERC grantees	2,500 USD/month personal stipend, on top of the grant	METU Development Foundation

Figures in this guide are based on the 2026 BAP Implementation Principles and current program announcements; scholarship ceilings were last updated on 25 June 2026. ADEP information follows the METU ADEP 2027 call guide (October 2026); call dates are tentative. Please check the relevant offices' web pages for the latest limits. The Research Coordination Office and the BAP Coordination Unit will be glad to help with any questions.