

Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences

Guidelines for Research Projects

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Impactful Policy Research in Social Science (IMPRESS)** aims to encourage social science research in policy relevant areas so as to provide vital inputs in policy-formulation, implementation and evaluation. The IMPRESS is an initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India and is being implemented by the Indian Council of Social Science Research. The basic idea to encourage policy research in social sciences is to have visible impact on polity, economy, society, culture, media, governance, health, environment, technology, law etc. It also aims to have enhanced coordination between academics and policy makers.

1.2 The broad **thematic areas** identified under IMPRESS are:

1. State and Democracy
2. Urban Transformation
3. Media, Culture and Society
4. Employment Skills and Rural Transformation
5. Governance, Innovation and Public Policy
6. Growth, Macro Trade and Economic Policy
7. Agriculture and Rural Development
8. Health and Environment
9. Science and Education
10. Social Media and Technology
11. Politics, Law and Economics

2. ELIGIBILITY

2.1 All Government funded institutions including Universities (central and state), private institutions with UGC 12(b) status and ICSSR Research Institutes are eligible to apply.

2.2 The Project Director should be a regular employee, possessing Ph.D. degree and have an interest in high quality research which may be evidenced by past studies, publications and academic background. In case the project has co- Director(s), they should have proven research interest.

2.3 Retired faculties with proven research interests can also apply under the scheme but they would be required to get themselves affiliated to any of the research institutions mentioned in clause 2.1.

2.4 Individual scholars can apply for maximum two projects at a time. However, in case both projects are selected, the applicant can choose only one project at level 3. Institutes having good research infrastructure and resources may apply for a number of proposals.

3. HOW TO APPLY

3.1 Applications will be invited through advertisements on IMPRESS and ICSSR websites.

3.2 After submitting the online application, a hard copy of the same, along with all enclosures, must be sent to: **IMPRESS, Indian Council of Social Science Research, Aruna Asaf Ali Marg, New Delhi 110067** before the last date of such submission duly signed and stamped by the affiliating institution.

3.3 The Applicants are required to submit an Abstract & a detailed Research Proposal in the given format including details of the Project Director and Co-Director(s) and the budget.

4. PROCEDURE FOR AWARD

4.1 Applications would be initially scrutinised by the ICSSR secretariat for their completeness.

4.2 All the eligible applications will then be sent for blind peer review through a computer generated referral system. In case there are any suggestions for improvement, the same would be sent to the scholar(s) before presentation.

4.3 All the short-listed scholars would then be invited for a Power Point Presentation before the Expert Committee at the ICSSR.

4.4 The recommendations of the Expert Committee would then be placed before the Steering Committee for its final decision.

5. DURATION AND VALUE

5.1 Research Projects shall have six months to two year duration, depending upon the requirement of the work.

5.2 The budget for Minor Projects would be upto Rs. 4.99 lakh. For Major Projects, it could be Rs. 5-15 lakh. Large inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional studies involving a number of scholars, could also be proposed with a budget from Rs 15-50 lakh or above. However, the Steering Committee's decision regarding budget will be final.

5.3 The amount will be disbursed in number of instalments, depending on the phases and duration of the study, as indicated in the Sanction Letter.

5.4 The Institute/group of scholars will frame the budget subject to the following broad expenditure sub-heads:

S.No.	Heads of Expenditure	Value
	Research Staff : Full time/Part-time/Hired Services	Not exceeding 45% of the total budget.
	Fieldwork: Travel/Logistics/Boarding, etc. including Books/Journals	Not exceeding 35%
	Equipment and Study material: computer, printer etc / Source Material/Software and Data Sets, etc.	Not exceeding 10%
	Contingency	Not exceeding 5%
	Publication of Report	5%*
	TOTAL	100%
	Institutional Overheads (<i>over and above the total cost of the project</i>)	5% or maximum Rs.1,00,000/- whichever is less

*The publication amount will be kept by the ICSSR for publication of the final report based on the recommendation of the Expert Committee constituted by the ICSSR.

5.5 Remuneration and Emoluments of Project Staff

- Project staff could be engaged by the Project Director on a full/ part-time basis during the research work and the duration/consolidated monthly emoluments of their employment may be decided by the project director within the limits of the sanctioned financial allocation and as per the ICSSR rules.
- Research Associate** @Rs.25, 000/- p.m.
(Qualification – Post graduate in any social science discipline with minimum 55% marks and NET/SLET /M.Phil/Ph.D)
- Research Assistant** @Rs.20, 000/- p.m.
(Qualification-Ph.D./M.Phil./ Post graduate in social science discipline with minimum 55% marks)
- Field Investigator** @ Rs.15, 000/-p.m. (not exceeding 6 months) (Qualification-M.A with minimum 55% marks).
- Retrospective payment for work already done is not permissible.

5.6 Re-appropriation: The Project Investigator may with the permission of the Institution may re-appropriate expenditure from one sub-head to another (except publication of report) subject to a maximum of 10 % of the head which is being increased. If the study necessitates re-appropriation of beyond 10%, it may be done only after the approval of the ICSSR

5.7 Selection of Research Staff should be done through an advertisement and a selection committee consisting of (1) Project Director; (2) One outside Expert (other than the institute where the project is located); (3) a nominee of the Vice Chancellor/Head of the Institution and (4) Head of the Department)/Dean of relevant faculty duly approved by the competent authority.

5.8 For all field work related expenses of Project Director, Co-Director and project personnel, rules pertaining to affiliating institutes shall be followed.

5.9 All equipment and books purchased out of the project fund shall be the property of the affiliating institutions. On completion of the study, the Project Director shall submit an undertaking in this regard. The ICSSR, however, reserves the right to take charge of equipment and books, if it thinks it fit in a case.

5.10 All project instalments will be transferred through Public Finance Management System (PFMS) and ICSSR shall implement the EAT module for ensuring transparency of expenditure at all levels; and to ensure that there is no parking of funds.

5.11 Purchase of equipment/ assets for the research Project is permissible only if it is originally proposed and approved by the ICSSR and does not exceed the permissible amount.

6. JOINING AND RELEASE OF GRANT

6.1 The Project Director has to join the project within one month of the award letter. For this, the scholar has to submit an agreement on the stamp paper, date of commencement, and grant-in-aid bill towards the first instalment. This may, however, be extended up to a maximum period of 2 to 3 months in exceptional circumstances with the prior approval of the ICSSR.

6.2 The grant for research project will be released in instalments as indicated in the Sanction Letter.

6.3 The institutional overhead charges to the affiliating institution will be released only after verification of the documents by the ICSSR.

6.4 The accounts and utilization certificate will be signed by the Finance Officer/Registrar/ Director and chartered accountant duly signed and stamped.

7. MONITORING OF RESEARCH PROJECT

7.1 ICSSR may constitute an Advisory Committee, if needed, to monitor the progress of the project.

7.2 The Project Investigator /team may organise seminars/workshops related to the project during the course of the study. In case any additional allocation is required for the seminar/conference, he/she is required to submit a separate application to the ICSSR.

7.3 During the course of the project, the scholars are required to publish research papers (minimum one/two) in peer reviewed journal(s) on the theme of the research undertaken duly acknowledging the MHRD/ ICSSR support for the research.

7.4 All project related queries will be addressed to the Project Director/ Affiliating Institution for their timely reply.

7.5 The ICSSR may, at any time ask for the progress of the study and verification of accounts and other relevant documents related to the Project.

7.6 Wherever the Advisory Committee is constituted, the sitting fee payable to the Members would be decided by ICSSR apart from TA and normal accommodation and hospitality that would be borne out of the project funds under field work head.

7.7 Mid Term Appraisal of Research Project: The ICSSR may hold mid-term review of research project through a team of consultants/experts for the purpose.

8. CONDITIONS

8.1 There shall be a Steering Committee headed by the Secretary (Higher Education), ICSSR Member Secretary and experts for overseeing the programme.

8.2 Same research proposal should not be funded by any other funding agency.

8.3 All project awardees are required to request their affiliating institute to open a dedicated account for the purpose of transfer of grant under IMPRESS and provide the name and address of the bank, account number, IFSC code etc to the ICSSR.

8.4 There shall be constant monitoring of the sanctioned proposals. This will be done by creating a webpage for each project where online submission of regular progress report and comments would be added, failing which the project director would be ineligible to receive subsequent instalments.

8.5 The duration of the project shall be for six months to two years. The Final Report may be submitted within two months after completion of the duration of Project. However, extension for submission of final report may be granted only in exceptional circumstances without any additional financial burden.

8.6 The contingency grant may be utilized for stationery, computer typing related costs, specialised assistance such as data analysis, consultation for field trip etc. related to the research work.

8.7 The scholar shall acknowledge support of ICSSR and MHRD (IMPRESS Scheme) in all publications resulting from the project output and should submit a copy of the same to the ICSSR along with final report.

8.8 ICSSR follows Government of India Rules & Directions with regard to SC, ST, PwD categories etc.

8.9 Defaulters of any previous fellowship/project/grant of the ICSSR will not be eligible for consideration until the applicant obtains the clearance from the ICSSR.

8.10 No scholar will be allowed to take up a research project along with any ongoing ICSSR or MHRD funded research project.

8.11 No request for additional grant in excess of the sanctioned budget will be considered.

8.12 The Project Director shall be personally responsible for timely completion of the Project.

8.13 The Project proposal/final report cannot be submitted for the award of any University degree/diploma or funding by any Institution by any member of the project staff, including the project director. The ICSSR, however, will have no objection if any member of the project staff utilizes the project data for this purpose while acknowledging the support of MHRD & ICSSR.

8.14 Purchase of equipment/ assets for the research Project is permissible only if it is originally proposed and approved by the ICSSR and does not exceed the permissible limit.

8.15 The project director shall report to the ICSSR in case he /she makes any changes in the research design. No major change can be made therein without the prior approval of the ICSSR.

8.16 Transfer of a Project/Appointment of substitute Project Director:

a) On the request from a university/institute, the ICSSR may permit the appointment of a substitute project director in exceptional circumstances.

b) The ICSSR may also appoint a substitute project director if it is convinced that the original awardee of the Project will not be in a position to carry out the study successfully or in any other extra-ordinary condition.

c) The ICSSR may transfer the place of the Project from one affiliating institution to another subject to submission of the following:

- (1) Satisfactory progress report (s);
- (2) No objection certificate from both previous and the new affiliating institute;
- (3) Audited statement of account and utilization certificate along with unspent balance, if any.

However, no transfer of programme/ Project director will be permitted in the last six months of the study.

d) Overhead charges will be shared proportionately (duration based) among the institutes as per the grant released in case of transfer of location.

e) In case a faculty retires during the course of the study, he/she may be allowed to complete the study.

8.17 Application submitted against one Call will not be considered in the subsequent Calls.

8.18 The Steering Committee reserves the right to reject any application without assigning any reason. It is also not responsible for any postal delays/loss.

8.19 Incomplete applications in any respect will not be considered.

8.20 The scholar can apply for more than one projects at a time. However, in case of selection of more than one projects, he/she has to choose any one of them.

8.21 The final authority related to the interpretation of the guidelines or any issue left is vested with the ICSSR and the Steering Committee.

8.22 No queries will be entertained by the ICSSR Secretariat until the final declaration of results.

9. COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT

9.1 On completion of the study, the scholar should submit the following:

- (A) A Book-length final Report in a publishable form along with an Executive Summary of the report (5000 words). Both documents should be submitted in hard format (two copies of final report and five copies of summary) and a soft copy (in pen drive) of both.
- (B) Copies of research papers/reports, etc. on the theme of research, published in reputed research journals during the period of study.
- (C) Softcopies of (if any) Data Sets, along with well-defined definition of data and other important information for documentation.

10. OBLIGATION OF THE AFFILIATING INSTITUTION

10.1 The affiliating institution is required to give an undertaking in the prescribed format contained in the Application Form to administer and manage the ICSSR grant.

10.2 It is also required to provide the requisite research infrastructure to the scholar and maintain proper accounts.

10.3 The affiliating institution will be under obligation to ensure submission of the final report and an Audited Statement of Accounts and Utilization Certificate, (in the prescribed Proforma GFR 12-A) duly certified by the Competent authority of the institution.

10.4 The affiliating institution shall make suitable arrangements for preservation of data such as filled in schedules, tabulation sheets, manuscripts, reports, etc. relating to the study.

10.5 The ICSSR reserves the right to demand raw data, or such parts of the study as deems fit.

10.6 The overhead charges shall be paid only after the completion of the project and on receipt of the final audited Statement of Accounts.

