

## **FAQ on R&D (2022-23) for Vigyansathi Portal**

### **A. FAQ on "Research and Development (R&D) projects"**

#### **1. How a new R&D project proposal can be submitted?**

Ans. Apply online through Vigyansathi Portal (VSP) ([www.vigyansathi.in](http://www.vigyansathi.in)) only when the advertisement is published. One-time Registration of PI and Co-PI at VSP is must before any online application. Please note that it is required to upload the full project proposal in a **single pdf** (max 20MB) with all original scanned signatures of the PI/ Co-PI/ Competent Authorities in all the respective places as mentioned in the guidelines and formats and later on the same original hard copy has to be submitted to the Department on demand, failing which the proposal will NOT be considered as a valid application.

#### **2. Is there any specific format for R&D project application?**

Ans. Yes, it is available in the Departmental Portal (under 'Scheme Guidelines') for Submission of new R&D project proposals.

#### **3. What is the last date of new R&D project proposal submission?**

Ans. Usually throughout the year or as per date mentioned in the advertisement/ portal, if any. The applications would be evaluated on regular basis throughout the year on first come first serve basis.

#### **4. Is there any specific date and time duration of subject wise R&D project proposal submission?**

Ans. Presently there is no such specific date and time.

#### **5. Is it possible to submit a R&D project proposal off-line through hardcopy or through e-mail, keeping the same format?**

Ans. There is no such scope. Any proposal which is submitted through off-line through hardcopy OR through e-mail will be summarily rejected.

#### **6. What are the different Terms and Conditions for getting financial assistance from DSTBT, Govt. of WB for new R&D Projects?**

Ans. It is available in the guideline at Vigyansathi portal (VSP) ([www.vigyansathi.in](http://www.vigyansathi.in))

#### **7. Can a PI from outside West Bengal apply for new R&D project?**

Ans. If the University/Institute is situated outside West Bengal, the PI can apply for R&D project, but the proposed work should address a problem relating to West Bengal.

**8. What is short listing of the R&D project proposals?**

Ans. Short listing of the R&D project proposals means to go through the proposals as received on line through Vigyansathi Portal and to check whether the proposals are submitted following all the R&D Terms & Conditions (T&C) of the Department before evaluation by the Expert Committee/ Department. If any proposal fails to satisfy any T&C, then the said proposal may not be considered for evaluation. Modification or relaxation in the policy for any specific deserving case may be done with the approval of the Competent Authority of DSTBT.

**9. Can all the applicants get invitation for project defending/ presentation?**

Ans. No. Only shortlisted PIs will get a chance for presentation before the Expert Committee Members and/ or Competent Authority of this Department.

**10. What is the minimum time gap for applying again by the same PI who already completed one R&D project?**

Ans. After submission of all the necessary papers/ documents (UC, Audited SoE, Final Report, VSP Completion form etc.) of final year grant for the previous project (if any) as well as having a Project Completion Certificate (PCC) issued by the Department as mentioned in the Guidelines. However, relaxation may be allowed for outstanding Researchers in extremely special cases.

**11. What is the minimum and maximum project duration?**

Ans. Minimum: 1 year. Maximum: 3 years - but it may be extended up to 2 years if the respective R&D Expert Committee and the Competent Authority of this Department desires on scrutinising its future outstanding prospects in terms of patenting, commercialisation, technology development, start ups etc.

**12. What is the maximum fund for a 3-Year Project?**

Ans. Usually maximum project fund is Rs. 30.00 Lakh for a 3 year project. However, upper ceiling of project fund may be relaxed in case of exceptionally deserving cases.

**13. What is the maximum fund allowed for purchase of an equipment/ instrument per project?**

Ans. Usually maximum equipment/ instrument cost allowed is Rs. 5.00 Lakh. Purchase of Computer H/W & S/Ws and its accessories are not allowed. However, both may be relaxed in case of deserving applicants with appropriate justification.

**14. Can a PI purchase Desktop Computer, Laptop, Workstation, software, Printer, Plotter, Scanner, HDD, AC, Refrigerator or any such capital items from any part of the budget?**

Ans. Usually not allowed.

**15. Can a PI necessarily require providing his/ her bank details in the proposal?**

Ans. No. Personal Bank details of the PIs/ Co-PIs are not entertained. Either Institute Bank details or project Bank details will be accepted on approval from the University/ Institute where project fund will be credited or debited vis-a vis.

**16. Whether submission of quotation/price list for purchasing of an equipment/ instrument is mandatory?**

Ans. Yes, it is mandatory, if the applicant asks for any equipment/ instrument.

**17. Can a PI from Private Institute/ University apply for new R&D Projects?**

Ans. Yes. PI and Co-PIs must be an employee/ faculty of a recognised and reputed University/ College/ Institute provided s/he satisfies the minimum educational qualifications/ experience as laid down in the Guidelines. Grassroot Innovators in partnership with an Institute which can receive funds are also eligible.

**18. What are the Formats for UC, SoE, Annual Report?**

Ans. All the Standard Forms (I, II, III etc.) are given in the Guidelines and application formats.

**19. How to get any Official document for a Co-PI of any project?**

Ans. From his or her Institute and will be required to submit both by the PI & Co-PI.

**20. Can a Contractual/ Not Permanent faculty be a PI?**

Ans. Depending on merit of the project, non-permanent PIs will also be considered.

**21. What is the maximum age of PI and Co-PI?**

Ans. Maximum age limit for both the PI and Co-PI(s) on date of notification is 60 years. The PI and Co-PI, at the point of submission of a project proposal, must be a working employee of a Govt./ Govt. Sponsored/ Private Institution and should have at least five (5) clear years prior to retirement as per the norms of the concerned institution. The age limit may be relaxed in exceptional cases.

**22. How many times a faculty can act as PI and Co-PI in same or different disciplines?**

Ans. As a **PI**: cannot act as PI for more than one (1) project (including all subject areas). As a **Co-PI**: Not more than two (2) on-going projects. Relaxation allowed for outstanding Researchers in extremely special cases.

**23. What are the minimum and essential qualifications of PI and Co-PI?**

Ans. (i) For projects with grant of Rs. 10 lakh or more: Doctoral degree in relevant disciplines of Science/ Geography/ Economics/ Management/ IPR or equivalent disciplines.

(ii) For "DSTBT Early Career Research Award" (For Projects with grant less than Rs. 10 lakh): Master's or equivalent Post Graduate degree in relevant disciplines of Science/ Geography/ Economics/ Management/ IPR or equivalent disciplines.

**24. Who can act as a Co-PI? Is it necessary that a Co-PI has to be from the same institute that of PI or he/ she can be from other institute as well?**

Ans. Co-PI(s) must be an employee/ a faculty of a recognised and reputed University/ College/ Institute. Grass root Innovators in partnership with an Institute which can receive funds are also eligible (in such case Co-PI's institute may also be considered for funding). It is not compulsory that PI and Co-PI has to be from the same Institute.

**25. If a Co-PI is from other institute then the permission from the head of the Co-PI's institute is mandatory or not?**

Ans. Yes, it is mandatory.

**26. Is it required to submit the UC, Audited SoE, and Project Report every year?**

Ans. Yes. It should be submitted within the due date.

**27. If the PI is unable to submit the UC, Audited SoE, and Project Report after completion of one year, what will be the fate of remaining fund release?**

Ans. Until & unless he/she submits the said documents in time, no fund will be released for the following year.

**28. What is the Project Starting date and what is the Project Completion date?**

Ans. Starting date will be counted from the date of joining of Project Personnel, if any (maximum within 3 months after receiving the grant/fund from DSTBT in normal situation). Otherwise, date of receipt of first instalment of fund/ G.O. date whichever is later. Completion date will be considered after issuing completion certificate by the Department.

**29. Why the Project Fellow (JRF/SRF) is not getting fellowship from the Institute?**

Ans. Project Fellow (JRF/SRF) may contact the Institute, not this Department.

**30. Does the project personal (JRF/ SRF) engage in any project can claim for permanent position?**

Ans. No engagement (like, JRF/ SRF) in DSTBT sponsored project is permanent. Any engagement under the project shall strictly be contractual and temporary in nature and will cease automatically as soon as the project is terminated. The manpower engaged (if any) for the project should be paid remuneration as per the latest rules and guidelines of the DSTBT, Government of West Bengal.

**31. What is the rule of engagement of project personal (JRF/ SRF)?**

Ans. After receiving fund from this Department, Advertisement may be published by the Institute, as per existing rule of the Institute followed by the formation of the Selection Committee for JRF/SRF. Then, recruitment of JRF/SRF by the Selection Committee will be done as per Qualifications & Experiences framed by DSTBT. Details of the selected JRF/SRF (qualification, experience etc.) are to be kept by the Institute. Fellowship of JRF/SRF may be credited to his/her Bank A/c or as per rule of the Institute. Related documents (photocopy) of the above mentioned points/issues to be submitted to this Department (DSTBT) from time to time with a covering letter mentioning the Project Sanctioned G.O.

**32. Does International and/ or National travel is permitted from the travel grant of the project?**

Ans. No. Only local travel for collection of data/ resources is allowed if necessary, only in the interest of the project. International travel is NOT permissible under the project. Travel grant should be utilized for the implementation of the project and should be adequately justified. Unless travel forms an integral of the project (e.g. fieldwork), travel budget should be sanctioned within reasonable limits. Travel grant given may be used only for different testing/ field work etc. related to the sanctioned R&D Project only. NO Project/Travel grant can be used for attending Seminar, Conference, Workshop etc. (National/ International). NO Air fare (Domestic/ International) is allowed from any part of the project fund. NO Awareness Camp/ Seminar/ Workshop are allowed to organise from any part of the project fund.

**33. Who will be the owner of the equipment/ instrument purchased after completion of the project?**

Ans. Funding Organisation, i.e., this Department. Otherwise, permission from the Department is absolutely required with proper justification. Any equipment/ instrument purchased from the fund of this Department must be made available to other Scientists/ Researchers as and when required/ available. The DSTBT, GOWB encourages maximisation of the use of **equipments/ instruments** which are to be strictly kept within the institution when not in use/ after the completion of the

project. Investigators must permit the use of spare or idle capacities of any equipment procured under the project by bonafide users within and outside of the Institute.

**34. Can a project run beyond its sanctioned tenure?**

Ans. **Please refer sl no 36 of this FAQ for clarification of Project Commencement Date and how the durations of "Project Year" (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>) are calculated.** Permission should be required from the Department for extension of time with proper justification without any additional financial burden.

**35. Is it mandatory to publish a paper in a journal to get the future fund?**

Ans. This Department and Expert Committee expects good quality research papers from the PI/ Co-PI to get the future fund.

**36. What is the Project Commencement Date, how the durations of "Project Year" are calculated and the Deadline for submission of the yearly (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>) UC, Audited SoE, Project Progress Report etc.?**

Ans. Please note that the **Project Commencement Date** for 1st year (New Project) is the date of joining of Project Personnel, if any sanctioned (which has to be completed within maximum 3 months after receiving the grant/fund from DSTBT in normal situation). In case there is no provision of Project Personnel in the project, date of receipt of first instalment of fund/ G.O. date whichever is later, will be treated as Project Commencement Date (New Project). Accordingly, 2<sup>nd</sup> year and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Commencement Date will also be fixed following the 1<sup>st</sup> year's Commencement Date. Keeping this in mind please note that you have **to submit (as well as uploading to Vigyansathi portal) UC, Audited SoE, Yearly Progress Report** (as per the Standard Forms) **within 14 months from the Project Commencement Date for 1<sup>st</sup> year, within two year from the Project Commencement Date for 2<sup>nd</sup> year and within three year from the Project Commencement Date for 3<sup>rd</sup> year.**

**37. How the yearly Evaluation of on-going R&D Projects is done?**

Ans. The PIs will have to submit the Yearly Progress Report and to make a presentation of their work before the Expert Committee or as decided by DSTBT/ Expert Committee.

**38. Who will bear the cost of patent searching as well as patenting if anything patentable comes out from the project?**

Ans. This Department will bear the cost of patent searching as well as patenting if anything useful patentable item comes out from the project and it is filed in consultation with the Department.

**39. Is it necessary to acknowledge the Department in each and every publication out of the result of the sanctioned project?**

Ans. Yes, it is mandatory and compulsory.

**40. Does the sanctioned budget provide Overhead Expense?**

Ans. No.

**41. Does ethical approval is required if the project involves humans or animals?**

Ans. Yes, it is mandatory, as per the Govt. rules.

**42. Can the same project be submitted in more than one funding agency at the same time?**

Ans. Not at all.

**43. What is the procedure for Evaluation of the Project? What about the provision of "Peer Review" of a Project?**

Ans. **For New project:** (i) The existing thirteen subject areas (first thirteen mentioned at Sl. No. 1 to 13 in the Guidelines) will be evaluated as per the Guidelines, i.e., shortlisting by DSTBT (Department) followed by presentation before the Expert Committees. The peer review by the experts may be done on case to case basis.

(ii) For evaluation of multi disciplinary research projects including the following five new subject areas (mentioned at Sl. No. 14 to 18 in the Guidelines), the new project



proposals will be initially considered for short-listing by the Department followed by peer review by external experts identified and selected by the Department. After getting the opinion of the External Experts, the PIs may be requested to make a detailed presentation of the project proposal before a Committee constituted by the Department.

1. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE/ MACHINE LEARNING, BIG DATA ANALYTICS, ROBOTICS & OTHER ICTs
2. MATERIAL SCIENCES & NANOTECHNOLOGY
3. ECONOMICS, MANAGEMENT, TECHNOLOGY POLICY AND IPR
4. TRADITIONAL AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE
5. AYUSH AND MEDICINAL PLANTS

**For On-going:** The PIs will have to make a presentation on the yearly progress of their work before the Expert Committee or as decided by DSTBT/ Expert Committee.

**44. How a PI will know about sanction or rejection of the defended project?**

Ans. Department will inform to all PIs through Vigyansathi Portal (VSP).

**45. Do you take project throughout the year or against advertisement?**

Ans. Usually throughout the year or as per date mentioned in the advertisement/ portal, if any.

**46. When advertisement is given?**

Ans. Any time in a year as decided by the Department.

**47. Where shall I get the format of the UC?**

Ans. In the Guidelines.

**48. Whether UC shall be according to financial year or after completion of one year as per order or Fellow appointment?**

Ans. After Completion of one year.

**49. Are we compelled to finish the project within 31<sup>st</sup> March?**

Ans. No it is not mandatory. It depends on the date of sanction of fund and joining of Research fellow (if any).

**50. Is audit compulsory at the end of every year?**

Ans. Yes. External Audit is mandatory.

**51. Within what time I should submit my annual report in normal situation?**

Ans. Generally, after one year.

**52. Do you allow carry forward of fund to the next year?**

Ans. No. Only adjustment of unspent amount (if any) from the next year fund is done.

**53. What shall happen to the Fellowship Head if the JRF/SRF resigns?**

Ans. Remuneration of Fellowship will be stopped until & unless any substitute joins.

**54. How shall I make new appointments in case Fellow resigns? Is old panel valid?**

Ans. As per Institutional norms.

**55. Annual report or Final report submission in Soft copy is allowed or not? If yes, should I submit Hard copy also?**

Ans. Yes, Soft copies are to be uploaded at VSP. Final year hard bind Report with all publications is compulsory.

**56. How shall I return unspent balance?**

Ans. Through TR-7 form at the specified banks. Details will be provided, if required.

**57. What is the time period of submission of final report after official end of the project?**

Ans. Immediately after completion of the project work.

**58. Shall I get any certificate from you after project completion?**

Ans. Yes. After submission all the final documents you will get a Project Completion Certificate (PCC) from this Department.

**59. How the salary of JRF/SRF and project cost will be given by the PI, in case release of fund is not done in time by DSTBT?**

Ans. Wait for release of fund from the Department.

**60. Why a project is rejected?**

Ans. On scrutinising the details of the project proposal through a rigorous evaluation process by the Expert Committee/ Department and checking for plagiarism. The Competent Authority reserves the right to reject any proposal which is not according

to the Terms & Conditions and relevant Guidelines or does not match with the Departmental Objectives or without assigning any reason. No correspondences will be entertained in this regard.

**61. Is it necessary to present both the PI and Co-PI(s) during the project defend?**

Ans. Normally PI should remain present along with the Co-PI to defend before the Expert Committee Members.

**62. May the Co-PI only Present instead of PI during presentation/ Evaluation?**

Ans. Normally not allowed. In case of special circumstances (reason to be clarified with proper documentary evidence etc.), Co-PI may be allowed.

**63. When and How do I know whether my project is selected or not?**

Ans. Department will inform in due time through VSP.

**64. Whether a MoU on Patent/IPR can be signed before initiation of after submission of a Project proposal?**

Ans. The Department encourages patenting (IPR) from the outcome of the R&D projects. Any **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)** arising out of the R&D Project work (if any) should be intimated to this Department and should be filed jointly in the credit of the Department of Science & Technology and Biotechnology and the implementing organisation. The sharing of royalty with respect to the IPR (if any) should be settled between the Institution and this Department through **MoU on Rs 10 Non Judicial Stamp Paper (Standard Form-IV), which is to be signed immediately after commencement of the project or as decided by the Department.** There is facility of novelty assessment in the Patents Information Centre (PIC), WBSCST under DSTBT.

**65. What documents are required to be submitted with on-going or final submission of project report ?**

Ans : **Please refer sl nl 36 of this FAQ for clarification of Project Commencement Date and how the durations of "Project Year" (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>) are calculated.**

- a) After completion of each year's work (for 12 months), 5 copies of Utilisation **Certificate** (UC) to be submitted as per the prescribed format of DSTBT **as per Standard Form-I** with original signature of the Competent Authority of PI's Institute (Authority to whom the fund is allotted). The UC should be submitted in one single page only and not to split into different Financial Years (FYs), even if the Project runs for more than one FYs.
- b) Detailed **Audited Statement of Expenditure (Audited SoE) to be submitted in line with the sanctioned Budget (as per Standard Form-III).**
- c) Any **unspent balance of the previous year will be adjusted from the next year's approved budget.** There should not be any committed expenditure from the unspent balance as shown in the UC and Audited-SoE.
- d) **The unspent balance** in the Final Year work has to be returned to DSTBT, GoWB in TR Form-7 at stipulated Bank before final submission of the UC and Audited-SoE.
- e) **Yearly Progress Report (both hard copy and soft copy)** should reflect the quantitative indication of the actual progress vis-à-vis the original proposal submitted to DSTBT **(as per Standard Form-II).**
- f) **Final Year Report should be given in a properly bound form** with detailed Physical Achievements, how the result helps the common mass of our state, no. of papers published/ communicated (with copy) etc. for the full project duration.
- g) **In case of any ambiguity,** PI should contact to the concerned Scientific Officer/ Scientist before submission of the UC, Audited-SoE and Report etc.
- h) **A covering letter** addressing to the concerned Scientific Officer/ Scientist of DSTBT **is a must** while submitting any or all of the above documents at any time.

**66. How a project is selected/sanctioned and rejected?**

Ans: Please see sl. No. 43 of FAQ.

**67. How many types of projects are supported under this R&D Scheme?**

Ans: Five. These are: Research & Technology development, Joint/ Collaborative Programme with Other Organisations, Studies, Survey and Documentation related to Science & Technology, Lab to land pilot scale demonstration projects (TDAC), Solutions of Problems of Different Line Departments and Industries

**68. How many numbers of broad subject areas/ categories are covered under this R&D Scheme?**

Ans: Eighteen. These are:

1. Agriculture & Horticulture
2. Animal and Fishery Sciences
3. Biological Sciences
4. Biotechnology including its Applications
5. Environment, Ecology and Climate Change
6. Physical Sciences
7. Mathematics
8. Chemical Sciences
9. Engineering and Technology
10. Medical Sciences including Public Health
11. Energy including Non-Conventional Energy
12. Earth Sciences including Geoinformatics
13. Water Resources including Conservation
14. Artificial Intelligence/ Machine Learning, Big Data Analytics, Robotics & other ICTs
15. Material Sciences & Nanotechnology
16. Economics, Management, Technology Policy and IPR
17. Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge
18. Ayush and Medicinal Plants

**69. What type of R&D Projects are encouraged? Does a Woman Scientist get any preference?**

Ans: Collaborative Projects which solve problems of society, various State Govt. Line Departments as well as Industries & other stake holders, like SC/ST beneficiaries with possibility of Technology Commercialization would be encouraged with a preference to Women Scientists. It is better if results of ongoing and completed projects of the organization are reflected in formulation of new proposals. Proposals should have specific, concrete, quantifiable objectives for sustainable development of the State and human welfare.

**70. What are the formalities for any multi-institutional collaborative project?**

Ans: In case of any multi-institutional collaborative project, **formal agreement documents** along with details of activity/ role/ equipment shared among the collaborating institutions/ scientists should be **submitted to the Department**. However, the Nodal Institution referred in the sanctioned project proposal assumes financial and other administrative responsibilities of the project. All the corresponding communications regarding purchase/ recruitment/ travel/ IPR/ publications will be the responsibility of the Nodal Institution.

**71. What are the formalities for purchase of any equipment/ instrument and/or Consumables?**

Ans: Purchasing of Equipments and Consumables including tender procedure, if any, must be followed as per the procedure of GoWB and as laid down in the Rules and Guidelines of PI's Institute (where the fund has been sanctioned).

**72. What are the steps for transfer of a proven technology for commercialization?**

Ans: The Department encourages technology transfer and commercialisation through Technology Development and Adaptation Centre (**TDAC**), WBSCST. In this case, sustainability aspect will be given due weightage. Ownership and Royalty sharing issues will be assessed on case to case basis. Licensing and cross licensing issues may be settled through agreement with the institute/Universities. A Committee under the Additional/ Joint Secretary DSTBT consisting of PSO/ Pr Scientist, Convenor of R&D Expert Committee, Nodal Officer of TDAC, External

Expert of Technology Transfer process (if needed) will settle the final agreements of technology transfer process.

**73. How any dispute will be look into?**

Ans: A Committee under the Additional/ Joint Secretary DSTBT consisting of PSO/ Pr Scientist and FA may act as a dispute resolution body in case of disagreement among Expert Committee, Nodal Officer/ R&D Convener and PI.

**74. In which case/s it is mandatory to refund the Project Cost?**

Ans: Entire project fund has to be refunded (with interest) in case of any negligence/ defalcation of Institution leading to the collapse of the ongoing project midway. An undertaking has to be furnished by the grantee Institution.

**75. Can a PI/ Co-PI apply for any other scheme while running a R&D Project or any other available Scheme of DSTBT, GoWB?**

Ans: While running **one** R&D Project (without completing it officially) or any other available Scheme it is NOT allowed to apply under the same Scheme. However, except that running Scheme, application under any other available Scheme is not restricted provided the scope and purpose are different.