

## BACK-TO-LAB POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME:GUIDELINES- 2024

### 1. Overview of the Scheme

Sl. No	Particulars	Details
1.	Name of the Scheme	<b>Back-To-Lab Post-Doctoral Fellowship Programme</b>
2.	Beneficiary group	Women qualified with Ph.D. in Science/Engineering subjects who are under Career break due to family commitments
3.	Objectives of the scheme	The Scheme is intended to support women having career break, facilitating their re-entry in scientific research by providing Post-Doctoral Fellowship
4.	Who can apply and Time slot to apply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Applicant should be woman who had to undergo career-break due to family commitments or other related matters.</li> <li>ii. Applicant should have scored minimum 60% marks for post-graduation.</li> <li>iii. Applicant should have qualified Ph.D. in Science / Engineering subjects.</li> <li>iv. Applicant <u>should not be employed</u> either on permanent or temporary basis and should not be receiving any sort of emoluments at the time of application.</li> <li>v. Those who have availed Post-Doctoral Fellowship earlier from KSCSTE or elsewhere are not eligible to apply for further PDF under the <i>Back to-lab</i> programme.</li> <li>vi. Those who have availed <b>Back-to-lab Research fellowship</b> earlier are not eligible to be considered for <i>Back-to-Lab</i> Post-Doc Fellowship.</li> </ul> <p><b>Time slot:</b> Tentatively during January every Year</p>
5.	<b>Age limit &amp; relaxation</b>	40 years - as on 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2023 (relaxed for 3 years for OBC and 5 years for SC/ST)
6.	<b>Kerala affiliation</b>	-Applicant should be a Permanent Resident of Kerala.
7.	<b>Research Centre for Post-Doctoral Research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Centre should not be the same as Ph.D Research Centre</li> <li>• Tenable only in R&amp;D institutions (<i>National/State level</i>) or University Departments <b>in Kerala</b> and should belong to the category of “Government Institutions” [however, premier National Institutions viz., IISER, IIT, IISc. etc outside the State shall also be considered ]</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Publication requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant should have published at least one research paper in a SCI Journal/ secured patent.</li> </ul>
9.	<b>Scientist Mentor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular/Permanent employee of the Institute having minimum 5 years of service left for Superannuation</li> <li>• Should have secured Ph.D. in Science or Engineering subjects.</li> </ul>
10.	<b>Nature of support</b>	Financial ( <i>Post-Doctoral Fellowship</i> ) and Technical ( <i>In terms of evaluation and technical advice through Group Monitoring Workshops</i> )
11.	<b>Quantum of support</b>	Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship @ Rs. 45,000 per month along with Annual Contingent grant of Rs. 75,000/- <b>HRA is admissible only for those who occupy rented accommodation during the project period, subject to a maximum limit of 10%</b>
12.	<b>Number of yearly Fellowships</b>	Maximum 20 nos. ( <i>Actual sanction is subject to availability of Government grant</i> )
13.	<b>Project Duration</b>	Maximum duration – 2 Years
14.	<b>Release of grant</b>	Grant is released to Head of the Institution , through National Electronic Fund Transfer (NEFT)
15.	<b>Selection process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary scrutiny for eligibility verification</li> <li>• Technical review by five subject experts</li> <li>• Presentation of Project Proposal in the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) meeting and recommendation by RAC</li> <li>• Execution of Agreement &amp; submission of HRA Certificate</li> <li>• Issue of Sanction Order and release of first instalment</li> </ul>
16.	<b>Mode of Application</b>	Online

## 2. Social Relevance and tangible output

Back-to-Lab programme is aimed to support women in Science in Kerala. The programme focuses on addressing the issue of under-representation of women in higher academics and profession particularly in Science. The programme will facilitate re-entry of women in Science after a career break necessitated due to family commitments. Active participation of more number of women in Science is socially relevant and significant especially in a developing economy. Further, the programme would benefit in qualitative interventions in Science research by effective utilization of human resource potential.

## 3. Commercialization Efforts

Projects which have commercialization potential will be identified by the Research Advisory Committee and necessary instructions will be issued on commercialization of research outcome.

## 4. Maximum grant amount and duration

Selected candidates are eligible for a monthly fellowship of Rs. 45,000/- for a maximum period of 2 years of implementation of the project. An annual Contingent grant of Rs. 75,000/- is also eligible for the entire project duration. HRA is admissible for those availing rented accommodation. The rate of HRA admissible in the Host institution shall be applied subject to a **limit of 10%**, upon submission of HRA Certificate in specified format. Those who reside in own house or occupying Institute /any Government accommodation facility are not eligible for HRA.

**Project duration** : Maximum 2 years.

## 5. Procedure of operation of the scheme.

### • Scrutiny of the Application

Preliminary scrutiny of the application is carried out for verification of basic eligibility conditions and supporting documents.

- **Peer review** – All eligible applications are subjected to peer review by five subject experts in the relevant area of research. Proposals with at least three reviews graded greater than 5 (*on 10 point scale*) are only considered for further processing.

### • Presentation before Expert Committee

Proposals which have passed the peer review requirements will be invited for presentation before the Research Advisory Committee. One or two reviewers will serve as additional Subject Expert during the RAC meeting. On favorable recommendation by the RAC, the proposal will be considered for funding by KSCSTE. The applicants will be informed of the decision and will be asked to execute an Agreement as per the guidelines of the scheme.

## 6. Issuing Sanction Order and release of 1<sup>st</sup> instalment

### • Date of start of the Project:

On execution of **Agreement** by the candidate and submission of **HRA certificate** duly filled up in specified format, KSCSTE will issue the Sanction Order which will also specify the yearly maximum allocation of grant under each item of expenditure. KSCSTE will release the 1<sup>st</sup> year grant immediately on issue of Sanction Order subject to the availability of fund. The grant will be transferred to the bank account of the Head of Institution through electronic clearing facility from Government treasury. The P.I. can join the Research Centre and start the project either on receipt of Sanction Order or on receipt of 1<sup>st</sup> instalment of grant as per the choice of the P.I and the Institute, preferably in two weeks' time and in no case later than one month of receipt of grant.

- On joining the Research Centre, the P.I should communicate the actual "**Date of Start**" of the project to KSCSTE, in prescribed format within one month of joining. This date is significant since all further processing of the grant is based on **Project Year**.

## 7. Submission of Progress Report:

The P.I should submit Annual Progress Report to KSCSTE on *Project Year basis*, in prescribed format. On completion of the tenure of fellowship, the Post-Doctoral fellow should submit detailed Final Technical report (FTR) of the research work done during the entire period of fellowship.

## 8. Progress Monitoring/Review procedure

- i. The project implemented by the researcher should have qualitative outcome. Good number of publications in high impact journals, patents, social relevance/ impact, scope of commercialization etc. are considered as indicators for monitoring the progress of research programmes.
- ii. It is mandatory that all Post-Doctoral Fellows should present the progress of their work in the Group Monitoring Workshop which will be held periodically. Subsequent release of grant will be subject to the recommendation of the Committee. The Workshop will provide opportunity to review the progress of the work based on which any specific requests on technical/financial/duration of the project are discussed for appropriate decision by the Council.

## 9. Periodic submission of SE & UC

On completion of first project year, in addition to the Annual Progress Report and the list of publications, the Post-Doctoral Fellow should submit Audited Statement of Expenditure & Utilization Certificate for the previous project year from the Head of Institution, within one month. On completion of the tenure of fellowship, the Post-Doctoral Fellow should submit Consolidated Audited Statements of Expenditure and Utilization Certificate to KSCSTE, within 3 months of the date of completion of the project.

## 10. Other necessary conditions as per the scheme

- i. There should be a Scientist Mentor who is a regular faculty/staff of the institution under whose guidance the researcher should carry out the work. The Scientist Mentor should have at least 5 or more years of service left in the Institution before retirement. **The Scientist Mentor should constantly monitor the progress of the project, facilitate smooth implementation of the programme and ensure timely submission of financial utilization certificates by the institute to KSCSTE.**
- ii. Post-Doctoral Fellow availing financial assistance / stipend from other State/Central funding agencies or other sources will not be simultaneously eligible for KSCSTE Back-to-Lab Post-Doctoral Fellowship. The Post-Doctoral Fellow should furnish an undertaking to the effect that she is not availing financial assistance / stipend from any other source simultaneously.
- iii. The implementing Institute should provide full infrastructural facilities such as laboratory, computer, library, communication, accommodation, water, electricity, etc. for smooth implementation of the project.
- iv. The unutilized portion of the grant (along with the interest accrued) at the end of the project period should be refunded to Council by DD in favour of Member Secretary, KSCSTE
- v. Scientists who publish technical/ scientific papers based on the research work done under the project should acknowledge the assistance received from KSCSTE.
- vi. The Post-Doctoral Fellow should not enter into collaboration with a foreign party (individual/ industry) without prior approval of the Council.

## 11. Conditions if the progress is not satisfactory

KSCSTE deserves right to terminate the programme at any time if it is found that satisfactory progress is not made in the implementation of the project.

## 12. Release of grant

The grant is transferred to the Head of the Institution through online account transfer. 1st year grant will be released along with the initial sanction order. Subsequent grant will be released by KSCSTE on review of Annual progress of the work and receipt of Statement of Expenditure and Utilization Certificate.

On completion of 1<sup>st</sup> project-year, the researcher should submit Annual Progress Report and financial documents pertaining to 1<sup>st</sup> project-year. The progress of work for 1<sup>st</sup> year will be assessed by the RAC before release of 2<sup>nd</sup> instalment of grant. The Fellowship for the last 3 months of 2<sup>nd</sup> project year and the allocation for Contingencies for 2<sup>nd</sup> project year will be released subject to the condition of publication

of / intimation on acceptance of at least one research paper in a refereed Journal (or secured at least one patent).

### **13. Project Completion documents**

- Final Technical Report (FTR)- 3 hard copies
- Statement of Expenditure and Utilization Certificate ( 2<sup>nd</sup> year & Consolidated)- in original
- Project Completion Report – 1 hard copy
- List of publications (in format)

(Additionally, soft copies of all the above documents are to be forwarded to the e-mail ID: [wsd1kscste@gmail.com](mailto:wsd1kscste@gmail.com))

### **14. Final review of the Project Report**

The Final Technical Report (FTR) will be reviewed by RAC/Subject experts

### **15. Re-appropriation of Funds and Extension details**

The Fellowship and Contingent grant sanctioned on yearly basis cannot be re-appropriated. Extension of project is normally not allowed. However, in genuine cases, a maximum period of six months of extension will be allowed with no additional financial commitments during the extended period. Such requests if any, should reach the Director, KSCSTE at least 2 months in advance before the initially scheduled date of completion.

### **16. Guidelines for publication of Research output**

- The Post-Doctoral Fellow should publish the outcome of the project work in at least one peer reviewed journal before completion of the project tenure of 2 years. The Fellowship for last 3 months (in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year) and the allocation for Contingencies for 2<sup>nd</sup> year will be released by KSCSTE at the time of settlement of grant **subject to submission of copy of publication/intimation on acceptance of paper.**
- The Post-Doctoral Fellow should inform KSCSTE about any achievement, patent submission/publication of any research outcome arising out of the project during or after the project tenure. Due acknowledgement should be given to KSCSTE in all the publications/patents/ news emanating from the research work.

### **17. Guidelines for IP Output generated**

If the results of research are to be legally protected, the results should not be published without action being taken to secure legal protection for the research results.

### **18. General Conditions if any - like Disqualification in any form of canvassing etc.**

Selection is done purely on merit basis. Canvassing in any form will lead to disqualification.

### **19. Uploads for online submission of applications**

1. Photo of applicant
2. Proof of Date of Birth ( Those who claim age relaxation should submit proof on reservation category- both documents can be merged)
3. Proof on permanent Residency in Kerala
4. Marklist and Certificate of PG ( documents can be merged as single file)
5. Certificate of Ph.D
6. Work & Research Experience certificate
7. Reprints of latest Research Publications in SCI indexed journal (Full length paper-maximum 2 nos)
8. Certificate on Break in Career- *IN FORMAT* ( applies to 'Back-to-lab' applicants only)
9. Biodata of Applicant ( include List of publications) & Biodata of Scientist Mentor – (Each one not to exceed 2 pages)
10. Declaration by the Applicant – *IN FORMAT*
11. Consent from Scientist Mentor – *IN FORMAT*
12. Endorsement from the Head of Host Institution- *IN FORMAT*