

Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment

ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMMES

Guidelines for implementing research projects

1. Introduction:

Kerala State Council for Science Technology and Environment (KSCSTE) has constituted this scheme to encourage and promote research talents for the implementation of highly qualitative research projects in the emerging areas of Engineering & Technology. Faculty from Govt. and Aided Engineering Colleges, Scientists from Research Institutions, etc. can submit proposals. Proposals received in this category are scrutinized and then sent to three experts in the concerned field for peer review. If the proposal is found to be worth considering, then it will be placed in the Research Council for Engineering and Technology Programmes (RC-ETP). The RC-ETP assesses the content and objectives of the proposed project and recommends the nature and quantum of assistance to be provided to each project. The maximum financial grant for a project is Rs. 30 lakhs for a duration of 3 years. Once the project is approved, a financial sanction order will be issued, subject to certain terms and conditions. The following guidelines assist for smooth implementation of the project in conformity with those terms and conditions.

2. Who can apply?

- Faculty from Govt. and Aided Engineering Colleges, Scientists from Research Institutions, etc. can submit proposals.
- Ph. D is desirable for the Principal Investigator (PI) of the project proposal. Otherwise, he/she shall be at least an M. Tech holder and the Co-investigator should be a Ph. D. holder.
- For interdisciplinary subjects, at least one of the co-investigator should be an expert with commendable experience in the specialized branch of engineering of the study.

3. Submission of Projects

- i) Fifteen copies of the project proposals along with a soft copy should be submitted in the Prescribed Application Format to:
Dr. Ajit Prabhu V.,
Joint Director & Head, TDPMD,
Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment
(KSCSTE), Sasthra Bhavan, Pattom, Thiruvananthapuram – 695 004.
- ii) Applications must have the endorsement from the Head of Institution (HoI) and it should be forwarded by the HoI.
- iii) After receiving the project proposal, it will be acknowledged with a reference number and other instructions, if any.

- iv) If the project proposal is as per the format and norms of KSCSTE it will be sent to referees for evaluation,
- v) After getting the comments from referees, the project proposals will be placed in the RCETP for final decision.(If all the referees are negative, the PI may not be called for presentation in the RCETP and this may be intimated to the PI.)
- vi) The RC-ETP assesses the content and objectives of the proposed project and recommends the nature and quantum of assistance to be provided to each project.
- vii) The decision of KSCSTE based on the recommendations of RC-ETP on such proposals shall be final.
- viii) The Maximum grant for a project shall be Rs. 30 lakhs for three years excluding overheads. In addition, the host institution will be eligible for an overhead @ 10% of total project cost. The Institutional overheads will be released only at the end of the project along with the final year grant.
- ix) Budget Heads:

Sl. No.	Item
1.	Manpower- Salaries/Wages i. Project Fellow * ii. Technical Assistant**
2.	Consumables
3.	Travel Expenses ***
4.	Contingencies ****
5.	Equipment
6.	Institutional overheads (10% of total expenditure, subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.5 lakhs)

* Project Fellow:

a) @ Rs. 16,000/- p.m. for the first two years and @ Rs. 18,000/p.m. for the third year + 10% HRA for candidates having 1st class B.E./ B. Tech or equivalent.

OR

b) @ Rs. 20,000/- p.m. for the first two years and @ Rs. 22,000/p.m. for the third year + 10% HRA for candidates having M.E./ M. Tech with 1st class B.E./B. Tech.

(Please note that neither the PI nor the Co-investigator is eligible for any salary or honorarium from the project.)

**Technical Assistant

@ Rs. 10,000/- p.m. + 10% HRA for candidates with Diploma in Engineering

*** Travel Expenses

@ Rs. 15,000/- (maximum) per year, relaxable in exceptional cases where the study involves extensive travel.

****Contingencies
@ Rs. 20,000/- (maximum) per year

- x) PI should submit budgetary quotation for the equipment to be purchased under the project.

4. Sanction order

- i) Once the project is approved, the PI will have to execute an agreement in the prescribed format in a non-judicial stamp paper worth Rs.100/, countersigned by the HoI.
- ii) Thereafter, Sanction Order will be issued. The sanction order will include breakup of funds allocated under the different heads like Equipment, Manpower, Travel, Consumables, Contingencies etc. The total cost of the project will be finalised based on the latest quotation(s) of equipment approved under the project and other relevant documents related to manpower, contingencies, etc. submitted by the Investigator.
- iii) Copies of the sanction order will be sent to the Principal Investigator (PI) and the Head of the Institution (Principal/ Registrar/ Director/ Comptroller, etc.)
- iv) Any correspondence with the KSCSTE regarding the project should invariably quote the reference number and date in the Sanction Order and it should be addressed to the Council, attn: Concerned official by name. (for eg., Dr. Ajit Prabhu V., Joint Director, KSCSTE)
- v) After issue of KSCSTE order, the Council will take steps to effect the payment normally within two weeks. A copy of the letter issuing the cheque will be sent to the HoI.

5. Date of Commencement of Project & its Duration

- i) The duration of the project is normally of 3 years and this will be specified in the first sanction order.
- ii) The project becomes operative with effect from the date of sanction order or receipt of the Draft/ Cheque by the implementing Institution. This date should be intimated by the Institution authorities/ Principal Investigator to KSCSTE.
- iii) The date of start of the programme should in no case be later than one month after the receipt of the draft/ cheque by the Institution.

6. Principal Investigator & Co-Investigator(s) and the Implementing Institution

- i) The project team consists of the PI, Co-Investigator(s) and the project personnel appointed as per the sanction order. There can be a Project Advisor also, if the PI wishes. The advisor shall be a Senior fellow in the field with reputation and experience in handling such Projects. The

Principal Investigator (PI) has the primary responsibility of the implementation of the project. It is necessary to ensure that the project is carried out by the project team in a cohesive manner. Periodic meetings of the team are essential for this purpose.

- ii) Once the project is sanctioned, PI should also furnish the following documents:
 - ✓ Date of start of the project
 - ✓ Details of the Project personnel recruited and copy of Appointment Order.
 - ✓ Specifications and Quotation of the equipment purchased.
 - ✓ Purchase procedures followed by the implementing institution.
- iii) KSCSTE's name should be engraved or affixed permanently on all equipment /instruments procured and also in the fabricated ones under the ETP programme of KSCSTE like **'Procured under the ETP project sanctioned from KSCSTE'**.
- iv) In case of PIs who would be superannuating during the duration of the project, association of a "in service" Co-Investigator should be ensured. On the superannuation of the PI, the Co-Investigator could be considered as the PI subject to the approval of the Head of the Institution and KSCSTE. In such cases, the Institution authorities should inform to KSCSTE, well in advance, about their "no objection" for providing the infrastructural facilities to the PI assigned for implementation of the project after his superannuation. However, it is suggested that the PI should ensure that the project term is well within the superannuation period. PI may apply accordingly for easy file handling.
- v) Having accepted the responsibility for the implementation of the project, the PI should be committed to implement the project over its duration and should have no plans to go on long leave.
- vi) In case, the PI is shifting to another institution on new appointment/ transfer/ long term deputation, the project could be transferred to that institution with the mutual consent of both the institutions and of KSCSTE. Such requests for transfer of the project should be sent well in advance and should be accompanied with 'No Objection' certificates from both the institutions and the Endorsement Certificate from the new Institution.
- vii) In case the PI leaves the project due to unforeseen circumstances, the Co-Investigator could be considered as the PI subject to the approval of the Head of the Institution and KSCSTE. Such a request should be sent at least 4-6 months in advance along with a detailed bio-data of the Co-Investigator and with consent letter from PI and Head of the Institution.

- viii) The PI as well as the implementing institution has the responsibility of informing KSCSTE about any change in the status of the PI/ Co-Investigator including relieving them on short term deputation for a continuous period of 3 months or more.
- ix) The implementing institution has an important role to play and in consultation with KSCSTE should take steps to ensure successful completion of the project, before relieving the PI or make proper alternative arrangements for ensuring the successful completion of the project.
- x) PI should strictly adhere to the purchase procedures of the implementing institution for the purchase of equipment sanctioned for the project.
- xi) The implementing Institution should provide necessary infrastructure facilities which should be adequate for smooth implementation of the project.
- xii) Normally only one project will be sanctioned to a Scientist/researcher at a time by KSCSTE. The PI can submit further proposals only after the successful completion of the sanctioned project. In case of budget constraints, preference will be given to the projects which are applied for the first time.
- xiii) A maximum of two projects shall be granted to a PI. In case of exceptionally worthy project proposals, such cases shall be decided separately by KSCSTE

7. Project Staff

- i) Selection of project personnel shall be as per the general procedure. The advertisement inviting applications for the post of project personnel should be notified through leading news papers (at least 3 leading dailies.)
- ii) In the case of selection for Project Fellow with higher qualification and higher emoluments (item No. 3-(ix), category (b)) a representative from KSCSTE shall be nominated as an invitee to the Interview Board.
- iii) PI should furnish the details of the Project personnel recruited in the project along with a copy of Appointment Order. If a vacancy arises in the due course, details of new project personnel appointed should also be reported promptly.
- iv) All the personnel including research personnel appointed under the project, for the full/ part duration of the project, are to be treated as temporary employees and will be governed by the Administrative rules/ service conditions of the implementing Institution. No reference on these issues should be made to KSCSTE and that KSCSTE will not be responsible for such appointments.

- v) The KSCSTE will have no liability, whatsoever, for the project staff after completion of the project duration and can not make any claim either to the implementing institution or to KSCSTE for any type of appointment.
- vi) Scale and emoluments for the posts which are not covered under this order are governed by norms prevalent in the implementing Institution.

8. Release of grants in yearly installment and financial management

- i) The grants for the project are released on the basis of yearly requirements taking note of the technical progress and expenditure incurred. The first sanction order indicates the budgetary allocation for the entire duration of the project under various heads like Equipment, Manpower, Travel, Consumable, Contingencies, Institutional Overheads, etc.
- ii) The first installment of grant (1st year grant) is released along with the first sanction order.
- iii) Diversion of funds from Equipment, Manpower, etc., is normally not allowed. However, any reallocation/ reappropriation of grants under different heads requires prior approval of KSCSTE.
- iv) The Equipment sanctioned in the project should be procured at the earliest to avoid any cost escalation. The PI and the implementing Institution should complete all formalities in advance for placing the order.
- v) There should not be a break/ time gap in between the project period. The project has to be done continuously and it will end on expiry of approved duration.
- vi) The recipient institution shall forward audited financial statements- Utilization Certificate (UC) and Statement of Expenditure (SE) countersigned by the HOI to the effect that the grant has been utilized for the research works for which it was granted.
- vii) The Statement of Expenditure and the Utilisation Certificates are *project-year-wise* and these documents should be furnished immediately after the completion of each year calculated from the date of start of the project (This period will be referred to as the project year- I, II, III respectively w.e.f. the date of start of the project.) The project year- I is calculated from the date of start of the project and not based on the financial year. [eg. If the date of start of the project is 16.10.2009, the project year – I will be from 16.10.2009 to 15.10.2010 and not from 16.10.2009 to 31.03.2010]
- viii) The implementing institution will maintain separate audited accounts for the project. Any interest accrued should be reported to KSCSTE and should be reflected in the Statement of Expenditure.
- ix) The subsequent instalment of grant would be released annually on the basis of expenditure incurred in the previous project year and expected expenditure in that year.

- x) However, any request for release of the next installment should be accompanied by the following documents:
- a) Utilization Certificate and Statement of Expenditure for the previous project year (in original);
 - b) Latest authenticated Statement of Expenditure including Committed Expenditure in the current project year
 - c) Technical Annual Progress Report, if not sent earlier.
- xii)* If substantial funds are available after verifying the Utilization Certificate & Statement of Expenditure, money will not be released. If the funds are nearing to be over during the middle of the year, a Statement of Expenditure should be submitted for the interim release of grant. The request for grants should however reach KSCSTE at least 30 days in advance.
- xiii)* The unutilized portion of the grant amount at the end of the project period, shall be refunded to KSCSTE forthwith by DD in favour of Member Secretary, KSCSTE. In the case of project duration exceeding one year, the amount need not be refunded at the end of first or second year as the case may be, but the amount may be carried forward, on verification of the financial statement by KSCSTE.
- xiv)* The institution shall not entrust the implementation of the work for which the grant is being sanctioned to another institution nor shall it divert the grant to other institution as assistance. In case the Institution is not able to implement the project, it should refund to KSCSTE the entire grant or the balance grant at the earliest.
- xv)* For permanent, semi-permanent or infrastructural assets acquired solely from the project grants, an audited record in the form of a register in the prescribed format shall be maintained by the Institution. The term "Assets" include (a) the immovable property acquired out of the grant; and (b) movable property of capital nature where the value exceeds Rs 1,000/-. The Institution is required to send to KSCSTE list of assets acquired from the grant.
- xvi)* The grant shall not be utilised for construction of any building unless specific provision is made for this purpose in the sanction order.
- xvii)* All the assets acquired from the grant shall be the property of KSCSTE and should not be disposed off or encumbered or utilised for any purpose other than those for which the grant had been sanctioned, without the prior sanction of KSCSTE
- xviii)* After completion/ termination of the project, KSCSTE shall be free to sell or otherwise dispose off the assets which are the property of KSCSTE. The Institution shall render to the Government necessary facilities for arranging the sale of these assets. KSCSTE also has the discretion to gift

the assets to the Institution or transfer them to any other Institution if it is considered appropriate and justified.

xviii) KSCSTE reserves the right to terminate the project at any stage if it is convinced that the grant has not been properly utilised or appropriate progress is not being made.

xix) Also, the PI is liable to refund the grant amount in part or in full in case of unsatisfactory implementation of the project or unwillingness to co-operate with the Council for monitoring/evaluating the progress of the project.

9. Progress evaluation and Monitoring

- i) PI shall furnish Progress Report of the activities on the project on quarterly basis (QPR). Quarterly Progress reports (QPR) should be submitted with effect from the Date of start of the project.
- ii) In addition, PI shall also furnish to KSCSTE 5 copies of the Annual Technical Progress report of the work carried on the project on *project- year-basis*.
- iii) KSCSTE may designate Scientist/ Specialist or a panel of experts to visit the Institution periodically to review the progress of the activities being carried out and to suggest suitable measures to ensure realization of the objectives of the project / programmes. During the implementation of the project, the Institution shall extend necessary hospitalities to the visiting scientist/ specialist or the Panel of Expert during the time of their visit.
- iv) KSCSTE may also organise Group Monitoring Workshops wherein the PIs/ Co-PIs and research staff will be invited to present the technical progress of their project. The Investigators should attend such workshops since it provides an opportunity to review their progress based on which any mid term requests by the PIs for additional grants/ extension in duration etc. are considered by KSCSTE. Subsequent releases of grant would be based on the reviewing and monitoring committees recommendations.
- v) Based on the assessment of the progress of the project, the ongoing projects may be ranked in one of the following categories

A	:	Excellent
B	:	Very Good
C	:	Good
D	:	Satisfactory
E	:	Poor

Rank based on the progress of the project should be at least 'D' for pursuing the project. If the grade is 'E', then the project will be terminated, and the balance amount will not be released.

- vi) If the PI do not submit Annual Progress Report and audited financial statements in time, the grant in the subsequent year will not be released.

10. Re-appropriation of funds

Re- appropriation of funds within the total budget may be approved based on the recommendation of RC-ETP. Re-appropriation from man power and equipment will not be normally allowed.

11. Extension of the duration of the project

The extension of duration of the project will not be granted normally. In exceptional cases where the work could not be completed within the stipulated time, PI should submit request for extension in the prescribed format, 6 months before completing the tenure. The final decision will be based on the recommendations of RC-ETP.

12. Guidelines for publication of results

- i. Investigators who wish to publish technical/ scientific papers based on the research work done under the project, should acknowledge the assistance received from KSCSTE.
- ii. The Investigator(s) should not enter into any collaboration with a foreign party (individual/ industry) without prior approval of KSCSTE.
- iii. Investigators are also requested to publish some of the research papers emerging out of the project work in leading Indian Journals.
- iv. 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. In such cases, the legal rights shall be proportionately shared with KSCSTE, unless specified, as the case may be.
- v. The knowledge generated from the project will be the property of KSCSTE and should be properly acknowledged. Transfer of technology generated, applications for patents, etc., shall be done only in consultation with KSCSTE and as agreed upon by KSCSTE and the host Institution.

On completion of the project, the PI through the Institution should send the following documents to KSCSTE to enable us to settle the account:

- a. 5 copies of the Project Completion Report in the prescribed format;
- b. Consolidated audited statement of expenditure and utilisation certificate;
- c. List of assets/ equipment in the prescribed format;
- d. DD/cheque for any un-spent amount with the Institution and
- e. Certificate from the Head of Institution to the effect that all the equipment purchased has been handed over to the Institution.

KSCSTE may send the Project Completion report for evaluation by Experts and for receiving suitable grade (as given in clause 8-v) . A review will be arranged for all completed projects and overall grading awarded which will be communicated to the PI. The grading for the previous projects should be mentioned in the subsequent project proposal.

The above guidelines provide general information only. KSCSTE reserves the right to review these guidelines and modify them, as and when required. In addition to these, the implementing agency has to follow its own rules and regulations, wherever necessary.

In case of any specific clarifications, please contact:

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