

## Science Research Scheme - Guidelines

The project which is approved for implementation is provided with a financial sanction which is subject to certain terms and conditions with the first sanction order. The following guidelines assist for smooth implementation of the project in conformity with those terms and conditions. The fund is constituted for the purpose of giving assistance in the form of grants to Scientists and Technologists working in S&T institutions/academic institutions in the State on R&D projects with particular relevance to scientific/research work to the economic and industrial development of the State.

### **Guidelines**

This document provides guidelines for implementation of project proposals supported under the Kerala State Council for Science, Technology & Environment (KSCSTE). The guidelines provide general information and the end result of this would be a smooth implementation of the project. For any further clarification or further details, please approach the concerned official dealing with the scheme. The Council reserves the right to review these guidelines and modify them.

### **I. Submission of Projects**

- 1) The project proposals may be submitted to the KSCSTE once in a year (1<sup>st</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> of June) to facilitate smooth processing. Proposals can be submitted by a full-time scientist/faculty of an academic institution, research laboratory and R&D organizations in the Kerala State.
- 2) The proposals that enable inter- institutional collaborative and inter-disciplinary research are encouraged. While fundamental research projects are supported, the applied research proposals should preferably address problems that are of generic concern/interest to the state.
- 3) 10 copies of the project proposal along with a soft copy have to be submitted in the prescribed format to the **Director, Kerala State Council for Science, Technology & Environment** for funding.
- 4) Applications must have the Endorsement from the Head of Institution (HOI), consent from the Investigators, Co-investigators, their detailed biodata and terms & conditions in plane paper duly signed by Principal Investigator and counter signed by HOI in each page. The PI need not submit the terms & conditions further if the project is sanctioned.
- 5) 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 expenditure subject to a ceiling of Rs.1.5 lakh.
- 6) Research proposals from Central Government institutions can be supported only if the proposal has a collaborator from the State institution. The infrastructure support provided in the scheme shall invariably be given to the State institution. In very rare and deserving cases, the expert committee can recommend equipment to Central Government institutions; however, the final approval lies with the Executive Vice President of the KSCSTE

## **Budget – Main heads**

- i. **Man Power:**
    - a. Project Fellow @ 22,000/month(PG in Science/B.Tech.)
    - b. Technical Assistant @ 19,000/month (B.Sc./Equivalent degree)
  - ii **Consumables:** (Chemicals, glass wares, research materials etc.)
  - iii. **Travel:** Rs. 30,000/year (In exceptional cases, where the study involves extensive traveling, this can be relaxed)
  - iv. **Contingencies:** Rs. 50,000/year (In exceptional cases, this can be relaxed)
  - v. **Equipment**
  - vi. **Overheads** @ 10% of total expenditure -subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.5 lakh.
- 7) After receiving the project proposal it will be acknowledged with a reference number and other instructions if any, submitting for relevant documents. If the project proposal is as per the format and norms of Council it will be sent to referees for evaluation. Otherwise, it will be returned to the PI. Research proposals should be reviewed by a panel of reviewers (national level) prior to the selection by the expert committee.
- 8) Any correspondence with the KSCSTE regarding the project should invariably quote the reference number and date and should be addressed to the concerned official.

## **II. Sanction order**

- 1) Once the project is approved, a sanction letter will be issued to the P.I. The total cost of the project is finalized based on the latest quotation(s) of equipment(s) approved under the project and other relevant documents related to manpower, contingencies etc. submitted by the Investigator. The sanction letter provides the detailed breakup of funds allocated under the different heads like Equipment, Manpower, Travel, Consumables, Contingencies etc.
- 2) The PI has to submit consent letter and willingness to undertake the project with the sanctioned budget and objectives. A formal sanction order will be issued by the Director on receipt of the consent letter.
- 3) After the issue of the Council order, the payment will be done through electronic transfer.
- 4) All formats are available in our website for reference. Documents in other formats will not be accepted.
- 5) Even though funds are sanctioned for the whole duration of the project, third year grant of a project shall be released only upon recommendation of the Committee during the GMW. This also shall be based on the publications in peer-reviewed journals or indications of the scope of publications/patents based on the quantum and quality of the work accomplished.

## **III. Date of commencement of project & its duration**

- 1) The duration of the project is normally for 3 years and this will be specified in the first sanction order.
- 2) 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 the Council within one month. **It will, in no case be later than one month after the receipt of the grant by the Institute.**

#### **IV. Principal Investigator & Co-Investigator (s) and the Implementing Institution**

- 1) The Principal Investigator (PI) has the primary responsibility in implementing the project. The PI should have Ph. D in the subject area. A minimum of one co-investigator is essential for implementing 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.
- 2) The PI should have more than three years of service period at the time of submission of the project. In case of PIs who would be superannuating during the duration of the project, association of an "in service" Co-Investigator should be ensured. In such cases, the Institute authorities should inform to the Council, well in advance, about their "no objection" for providing the infrastructural facilities to the new investigator for implementation of the project after his/her superannuation.
- 3) Having accepted the responsibility for the implementation of the project, the PI should be committed to implement the project and should have no plans to go on long leave during the project period.
- 4) No premature closing is allowed except those wherein the RC/GMW has recommended closing of the project due to poor progress/non-compliance of the terms of implementation. The project sanctioned for 3 years cannot be closed prematurely owing to the PI leaving the place for better opportunities. There should be an institutional mechanism to transfer the project to the next eligible person, if available or to return the funds received till date to the Council.
- 5) 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 this Council. 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.
- 6) 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 both PI, Co-PI, Head of the Institute 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.
- 7) The PI as well as the implementing institution has the responsibility of informing the Council 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. The implementing institution has an important role to play and in consultation with this Council should take steps to ensure successful completion of the project, before relieving the PI.

- a) The implementing institute should provide full infrastructural facilities such as accommodation, water, electricity, library, communication facilities etc. for smooth implementation of the project.
- b) Normally only one project will be sanctioned to a scientist at a time by the Council.

#### **V. Project Staff**

- 1) 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 Institute. No reference on these issues should be made to the Council. The Council will have no liability, whatsoever, for the project staff after completion of the project duration.
- 2) Scale and emoluments for the posts not covered under this order are governed by norms prevalent in the implementing Institution or as may be decided by this Council.

#### **VI. Release of grants in yearly installment and financial management**

- 1) 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 duration of the project under various heads.
- 2) The first installment of grant is released along with the first sanction order shall consists of the entire grant for the first year of the project. Diversion of funds from equipment and manpower heads etc. is normally not allowed. However, any reallocation/ re-appropriation of grants under different heads requires prior approval of this Council.
- 3) The Equipment sanctioned in the project should be procured at the earliest to avoid any cost escalation. The PI and the implementing Institute should complete all formalities in advance for placing the order.
- 4) There should not be a gap in between the project period. The project has to be done continuously and it will end on expiry of approved duration.
- 5) Annual progress report will be submitted as on completion of each project year. The recipient institution shall forward an audited utilization certificate and statement of expenditure (UC & SE) signed by PI and countersigned by the HOI to the effect that the grant has been utilized for the research works for which it was granted, to the Director, KSCSTE within 3 months of the completion of the project year. The UC & SE shall be furnished on a project year basis. The institution should maintain separate audited accounts for the project.
- 6) The second year grant would be released on the basis of expenditure incurred in the previous project year and expected expenditure in that year. Third year grant will be released only upon recommendation of the GMW Committee based on the publications in peer-reviewed journals or indications of the scope of publications/patents based on the quantum and quality of the work accomplished.

- 7) However, any request for release of the next installment should be accompanied by the following documents: a) Audited Utilization Certificate and Statement of Expenditure for the previous project year (in original) b) Latest authenticated Statement of Expenditure including Committed Expenditure and interest accrued if any and a detailed Annual Progress Report.
- 8) After receiving Utilization Certificate & Statement of Expenditure, if unspent funds are available as per the U.C, the money for the subsequent years will be released after deducting the unspent amount. The request for grants should however reach the Council at least 30 days in advance.
- 9) The unutilized portion of the grant amount at the end of the project period shall be refunded to Council 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 as per the sanction from the Council.
- 10) The grant amount sanctioned for the I<sup>st</sup>, II<sup>nd</sup> or III<sup>rd</sup> year should be utilized within the same project year and the unutilized portion of the grant amount should not be used without prior permission from the Council. Subsequent release of grant should be based on the yearly appropriation of the grant utilized for the purpose for which it was sanctioned.
- 11) The audited Statement of expenditure and the Utilization Certificates are to be submitted on project year basis within a period of 3 months from the completion of the project year. (ie. if date of start of the project is 12.01.2015, then the first statement of account and utilization certificate will be for the period 12.01.2015 to 11.01.2016, the next statement will be for the period 12.01.2016 to 11.01.2017 and so on.)
- 12) **The implementing institute will maintain separate bank account and it should be reported to Council** and the interest accrued should be reflected in the Statement of Expenditure.
- 13) The institute will not entrust the implementation of the work for which the grant is being sanctioned to another institution nor will it divert the grant to other institute as assistance. In case the Institute is not able to implement the project, it should refund the entire grant to the Council or the balance grant at the earliest.
- 14) 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 Institute. 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 Institute is required to send to this Council list of assets acquired from the grant.
- 15) All the assets acquired from the grant will be the property of KSCSTE and should not be disposed off or encumbered or utilized for purpose other than those for which the grant had been sanctioned, without the prior sanction of this Council.
- 16) After completion/ termination of the project, the KSCSTE will be free to sell or otherwise dispose off the assets, which are the property of the Council. The Institute shall render to

the Government necessary facilities for arranging the sale of these assets. The Council also has the discretion to gift the assets to the Institute for research purpose or transfer them to any other Institute if it is considered appropriate and justified.

- 17) The grant shall not be utilized for construction of any building unless specific provision is made for this purpose in the sanction order.
- 18) The Council reserves the right to terminate the project at any stage if it is convinced that the grant has not been properly utilized or appropriate progress is not being made.

## **VII. Extension of the duration of the project and reappropriation of funds**

The extension will not be granted normally. In exceptional cases where the work could not be completed, PI should submit request for extension in the prescribed format, 6 months before completing the tenure and the request will be placed before the next Group Monitoring Workshop (GMW) for recommendation and further approval of Council.

## **VIII. Reappropriation of funds.**

Reappropriation of funds within the total budget may be approved based on the recommendation of the GMW. Reappropriation from manpower and equipment will not be normally allowed.

## **IX. Progress evaluation and Monitoring**

- 1) The PI through the implementing Institute will furnish the Annual Technical Progress report of the work carried out on the project on an annual basis. (ie. if the date of start of a project is 12.01.2015 the first Annual Technical Progress report shall be for the period 12.01.2015 to 11.01.2016, the next will be from 12.01.2016 to 11.01.2017 and so on).
- 2) In addition, this Council may designate Scientist/ Specialist or an Expert Panel to visit the Institute periodically to review the progress of the work being carried out and to suggest suitable measures to ensure realization of the objectives of the project. The implementing Institute will provide all facilities to the visiting scientist/ specialist or the Expert Panel by way of accommodation etc. at the time of their visit.
- 3) This Council also organizes Group Monitoring Workshops (GMW) meetings. GMW shall be conducted periodically for keeping strict vigil on the progress of the project work by each PI. It shall be mandatory for all PIs who have completed one year to present the work in the Expert Committee meeting. Third year grant of a project shall be released only upon recommendation of the Committee during the GMW. This also shall be based on the publications in peer-reviewed journals or indications of the scope of publications/patents based on the quantum and quality of the work accomplished.
- 4) On completion of the project, the PI through the Institute should send the following documents within 6 months of completion of the project period to this Council to enable us to settle the account:
  - a) 5 copies of the Final Technical Report (FTR) in the prescribed format.
  - b) 2 copies of Project Completion Report (PCR) in the prescribed format.
  - c) One page abstract highlighting the outcome.

- d) Soft copy of FTR & PCR
  - e) Consolidated audited statement of expenditure and utilization certificate.
  - f) Asset transfer certificate in the prescribed format.
  - g) DD/ cheque for any unspent amount drawn in favour of *Member Secretary, KSCSTE, Sasthrabhavan* payable at Thiruvananthapuram.
  - h) Reprints/copies of papers/patents/articles etc.
- 5) The Final Technical Report (FTR) should be evaluated by referees with grading. The FTR submitted within 6 months after completion of the project shall be evaluated and graded by a committee of experts. Second project submitted by PIs belonging to the top 10% (based on grading) shall be allowed to present their new proposal directly before the Research Council Meeting (peer-reviewing is relaxed) for consideration of financial support. No projects shall be sanctioned in future by KSCSTE to the PIs whose project FTR are graded below 6.

#### **X. Guidelines for publication of results**

- 1) Investigators wishing to publish technical/ scientific papers based on the research work done under the project, should acknowledge KSCSTE for financial assistance in all the publication that have emanated from the project work during or after completion of the projects.
- 2) The Investigator(s) should not enter into collaboration with a foreign party (individual/ industry) without prior approval of the Council.
- 3) Investigators are also requested to patent/publish the outcome of the project work in leading Journals. Patents shall be filed only with the concurrence of KSCSTE.
- 4) 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.

#### **XI. Dr. S. Vasudev Award**

Final Technical Report (FTR) of the completed SRS projects will be processed for Dr. S. Vasudev Award. The FTR submitted within 6 months of the completion of the project period with publications in peer reviewed journals will only be considered for Dr. S. Vasudev Award. The Vasudev Awardee shall be allowed to present their 2<sup>nd</sup> project directly during the Research Council (RC) meeting (peer-reviewing is relaxed) for financial assistance.

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