

# YOUNG INVESTIGATORS PROGRAMME IN BIOTECHNOLOGY (YIPB)

## Guidelines for implementing research projects

### 1. Introduction

Kerala Biotechnology Commission under the Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment provides project mode support to young researchers through Young Investigators Programme in Biotechnology (YIPB) to provide quick research support to pursue their ideas in newly emerging and front line areas of research in Biotechnology.

Proposals can be submitted in any branch of biotechnology related to medical, agriculture, veterinary, environment, marine, industrial or bioresources. Post-Doctoral students/Research Associates not having permanent positions can also be Principal Investigator provided a senior faculty/scientist holding permanent positions shall associate as Co-Principal Investigator.

### 2. Eligibility Criteria

The applicant should:

- (a) possess Ph.D. in any branch of Life Sciences
- (b) have three years Post- Doctoral experience in Biotechnology and
- (c) be less than 40 years of age

Age relaxation of 5 years would be given to scientists belonging to SC/ST/OBC, Women and Physically Handicapped category.

### 3. Funding pattern

The total funding provided is up to a maximum of Rs. 30 lakh (excluding overhead charges subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.5 lakh) for a period not exceeding three years. If the proposed objectives can be achieved in less than three years, the budget may be reduced accordingly. Young Scientists not drawing any other fellowship/salary are eligible for a lump sum fellowship of Rs. 35,000/- per month from the grants, in addition to the support for travel, contingency, consumables and minor equipments. PI with regular position can seek manpower at junior level (Project Fellow or Technical Assistant as per KSCSTE Rules). But, either the salary or the fellowship, only one can be availed at a time. Overhead Charges @ 10% of the total expenditure subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.5 lakh will be provided to the implementing institution over and above the project cost. The sanctioned projects may be operated in Research Institutes/Colleges, University Departments or selected National Research Institutes within the state.

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 to the State. Generally, no major equipment for research are granted to Central Government Institutions in the State unless the proposal is in collaboration with an institute in the State, in which case the equipment support will be provided to the institute in the State. In very rare and deserving cases, the expert committee of the respective programme can

recommend equipment to Central Government Institutes: however, the final approval lies with the Executive Vice-President of KSCSTE.

#### 4. Submission of Projects

- i. The project proposal should be submitted in the prescribed application format to: The Director, Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment (KSCSTE), Sasthra Bhavan, Pattom, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 004. The soft copy shall be sent as e.mail to [kbc.kscste@kerala.gov.in](mailto:kbc.kscste@kerala.gov.in) / [biotechkerala@gmail.com](mailto:biotechkerala@gmail.com).
- 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 five referees for evaluation. After getting the comments from referees, the project proposals will be placed in the expert committee for final decision.  
(The PI may be called for presentation, if at least three of the five referees are positive. In all the cases, the decision shall be intimated to the PI.)
- v. The expert committee assesses the content and objectives of the proposed project and recommends the nature and quantum of assistance to be provided to each project. The decision of KSCSTE based on the recommendations of the expert committee on such proposals shall be final.

#### vi. Budget Heads:

Sl. No.	Item
1.	Manpower <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PIs not drawing any other fellowship/salary are eligible for fellowship of Rs. 35,000/- per month</li> <li>• For Salaried PIs - Project fellow @ Rs. 22, 000/- per month or a Technical Assistant @Rs. 19,000/- per month.</li> </ul>
2.	Equipments*
3.	Consumables
4.	Travel expenses
5.	Contingencies
6.	Institutional Overhead (10% of total project cost subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.5 lakhs)

\* PI should submit budgetary quotation for the equipment to be purchased under the project. Service tax, Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) etc. should be included in the budget during project submission and the expenditure has to be met from the project head itself.

#### 5. Sanction order

- i. Once the project is approved, the PI will have to execute an agreement in the prescribed format countersigned by the HoI.

The PI shall execute the Terms and conditions as per the following:

Sl. No.	Institutions / Agencies	T&C execution in
1	Government Institutions/ State Universities/Central Universities in Kerala / Government Aided	Plane paper duly signed by the PI & Head of the Institution in each page
2	Unaided Academic & Research Institutions/NGOs	Non-Judicial Stamp paper worth Rs. 200/-

- 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.
- iii. 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.
- iv. Copies of the sanction order will be sent to the Principal Investigator (PI) and the Head of the Institution (Principal/ Registrar/ Director/ Comptroller, etc.)
- v. 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 Director, KSCSTE )
- vi. After issue of KSCSTE order, the Council will take steps to effect the payment. The payment will be done through electronic transfer.

#### 6. 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 funds by the Institution.
- iv. The project team consists of the PI and the project personnel as per the sanction order. Principal Investigator (PI) has the primary responsibility of the implementation of the project. It is necessary to ensure that the project is carried out in a cohesive manner.

#### 7. Project implementation

- i. Once the project is sanctioned, PI should furnish the following documents:
  - a. Date of start of the project
  - b. Details of the Project personnel recruited and copy of Appointment Order
  - c. Specifications and Quotation of the equipment purchased
  - d. Purchase procedures followed by the implementing institution
- ii. KBC- KSCSTE's name should be engraved or affixed permanently on all equipment /instruments procured.

- iii. 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.
- iv. The implementing Institution should provide necessary infrastructure facilities which should be adequate for smooth implementation of the project.

## 8. **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 newspapers (at least 3 leading dailies.)
- ii) 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.
- iii) 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.
- iv) The KSCSTE will have no liability, whatsoever, for the project staff after completion of the project duration and cannot make any claim either to the implementing institution or to KSCSTE for any type of appointment.

## 9. **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. The first instalment of grant (1<sup>st</sup> year grant) is released along with the first sanction order. Diversion of funds from Equipment, Manpower, etc., is normally not allowed. However, any reallocation/ re-appropriation of grants under different heads require prior approval of KSCSTE.
- ii) 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.
- iii) 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.
- iv) 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.

## 10. **Progress evaluation and Monitoring**

- i) PI shall furnish to KSCSTE the Annual Technical Progress report of the work carried on the project on *project- year-basis*.
- ii) 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.
- iii) 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 committee's recommendations.
- iv) 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.

## 11. **Re-appropriation of funds**

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

## 12. **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 the expert committee.

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

- i). Investigators wishing to publish technical/ scientific papers based on the research work done under the project should acknowledge the assistance received from Kerala Biotechnology Commission.
- ii). The Investigator(s) should not enter into collaboration with a foreign party (individual/ industry) without prior approval of KBC, KSCSTE.
- iii). Investigators are also requested to patent/publish the outcome of the project work in leading 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.

#### 14. Submission of Final Technical Report (FTR)

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. Final Technical Report in the prescribed format with the soft copy to [kbc.kscste@kerala.gov.in](mailto:kbc.kscste@kerala.gov.in) / [biotechkerala@gmail.com](mailto:biotechkerala@gmail.com)
- 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.

The Final Technical Report (FTR) submitted within 6 months after completion of the project shall be evaluated and graded (in 10.0 point scale; 10.0 being the highest grade) by an expert committee. The FTR based on merit shall be graded and top graded project be given award and considered for second phase after presentation. No projects shall be sanctioned in future by KSCSTE to the PIs whose project FTR are graded below 6.0.

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:**

##### **The Advisor**

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