

Revised Guidelines for Research Projects

1. Submission of the Project Proposals

- a) Any teaching staff of the University on regular appointment can apply for extra mural research project from any national/international funding agency as Principal Investigator (PI) or Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) as per the format of the funding agency.
- b) Teaching hours and other academic/management assignment given to PI/Co-PI of the University should not be affected while conducting research.
- c) The research work proposed in the project does not in any way duplicate the work already done or being carried out elsewhere on the subject. The same project proposal should not been submitted to any other agency for financial support.
- d) A complete set of research project proposal as per the format of the funding agencies should be forwarded to the Registrar through the Head/ In-Charge of the concerned Department. The Registrar shall forward the proposal to the Vice-Chancellor for approval.
- e) If the project is with a non-government agency, a statement on terms and conditions of the project including the right of patents and royalties must be spelt out clearly.

2. Sanction of the Projects

- a) The letter of sanction and details of the amount sanctioned under different budget heads, duration of the Project and other terms and conditions should be communicated to the Finance Office along with a copy of the Project, if sanctioned, after revision/changes by the funding agency.
- b) The date of start of project will be the date of actual receipt of first instalment of the grant sanctioned or as specified by the funding agency.
- c) The funds released by the funding agency may be received by Finance Officer under proper receipt in acknowledgment. A separate bank A/C titled "SIKKIM UNIVERSITY: PROJECTS" may be opened to monitor all inflow and out of funds. The A/C which will be of 'function Officio' nature (to be closed as soon as the project is over) may be operated by the PI and the DDO of the University jointly. All expenditure sanction will be accorded by VC only, subject to following usual procedure of scrutiny. Accounts of the project will be monitored and reported by the FO.

3. Operation of the Projects

- a) All purchases shall be supervised and handled by a committee called the Project Purchase Committee (PPC) for each project consisting the PI (Convener), Co-PI and two members (out of which one may be from the teaching faculty of any Department). This committee, proposed by the PI and approved by the VC shall be constituted in the beginning of the Project and would serve the entire duration of the project.
- b) Purchase of item(s) up to ₹ 15,000/- can be made by the PI/Co-PI without calling quotations.
- c) Purchases above ₹ 15,000/- should be made strictly as per the General Financial Rules 2005 unless and otherwise specified by the funding agency.
- d) Consumables may be purchased from standard Indian firms or foreign companies on the basis of rate contracts approved by the University. In case of consumables for which rate contracts are not available, quotations will be invited from all the known firms and the procedure to be followed as per the financial norms of the University.
- e) Supply order will be signed by the PI after scrutiny of the tenders/quotations obtained from various suppliers. The orders will be normally placed with the supplier whose quotations are the lowest, unless for some technical reasons which should be clearly stated and defended by the PPC. In case of any discrepancy, the matter shall be referred to VC and her/his decision shall be final.
- f) All bills in respect of project (including bills for advance) will be signed by the PI and sent to the Finance Office duly completed in all respects for payment. It will be the responsibility of the PI to see that the bills are complete in all respects and that they are in order.
- g) Advances will be paid to the PI by cheques/ bank transfer. The accounts of advances taken should be rendered within a period of 30 days from the date of drawing the advance. However, this shall not apply in cases of letters of credit.
- h) Payments of bills should be made through bank transfer/cheques drawn in favour of the parties concerned by the Finance Department
- i) In respect of salary of all part time, *ad-hoc*, regular, daily-wage based honorarium and consolidated salary based employees of project, it will be made by cheques in the name of the concerned employees only or by cheque to be credited to their respective bank accounts which must be mentioned on the fellowship or salary bills, duly countersigned by the concerned person and PI.
- j) TA/DA in the project for field work and visits within Sikkim or outside Sikkim (in India or Abroad) shall be paid as per rules of the University or as per guidelines of the funding agency to the PI, Co-PI and Project staff

as well as Ph.D. students working on jobs related to the Project.

- k) The period spent by the PI, Co-PI and Project Staff on field work or collaborative work in another Laboratory relating to research work of the project (in India or Abroad) should be treated on duty (provided this does not affect the teaching obligation) and will need the approval of VC.
- l) In case the funding agency makes *ad-hoc* payments of the instalments, the PIs may provide the break-up under different heads of the project. However, reappropriation within different Heads can be affected by the PI with the approval of VC within the total overall budget sanctioned by the funding agency.
- m) Blanket approval for the financial year of the sanctioned project as per the sanction order of the funding agency may be sought from VC by PI after receiving the first instalment of the grant.

4. Annual statement of Expenditure and Utilization Certificate

- a) The PI should prepare the statement of expenditure and utilization certificate of every project as per the time schedule prescribed by the funding agency. The same may be sent to the Finance Office within 15 days of the said date for confirmation/reconciliation for onward transmission to the funding agency, or vice-versa.

5. Management of Overhead Charges

- a) The project proposals to all funding agencies must ask for a minimum of 20% Overhead Charges (of the Total Grant of the Project) for the University. However, many funding agencies have their norms for overhead which the University shall agree to that.
- b) All expenses related to Laboratory maintenance and renovation, purchase of furniture, personal computers including laptops, minor equipment costing up to ₹ 50,000 and printers to be used as office equipment; repair of existing furniture, wooden work like partitions, shelves etc. flooring, making dust free rooms, water and electricity connections including labour charges, purchasing of air conditioners, invertors, voltage stabilizers, UPS and air curtains. This type of work could be assigned to the outside agencies to avoid delays. Proper procedure of inviting quotations should, however, be followed. No structural changes can be made without the consent of VC and such changes can be made after certification by the University.
- c) Repair and up gradation of scientific equipment, computers and peripherals, payment of annual maintenance/service contracts, purchase of minor accessories for equipment.
- d) Cost of advertisements in newspapers for project positions as well as other notices.
- e) Hiring manpower including secretarial assistance (typing/computer

operator/accounting, etc.) subject to approval by VC, at University approved rates.

- f) Registration fee towards participation of PI, Co-PI and project staff in Conferences/Symposia/Workshops/Seminars and on visits to other laboratories for discussions in collaborative research-work subject to prior approval of VC.
- g) Life membership or annual membership of the academic societies directly related to the activities of the project may be claimed by PI/Co-PI.

6. Consultancy/honorarium

1. The Vice Chancellor would examine each request for permitting a member of the faculty to accept a consultative or similar assignment keeping in mind that the proposed assignment would be in the interest of the university in the long run and will not adversely affect the faculty member's work at the University.
2. The fees received by the teachers on account of above in a financial year, shall henceforth be shared between the teachers and the University in the following manner:
 - i) Money received upto 30 % of the salary (Basic+DA+CCA) = No sharing
 - ii) Money received beyond 30 % and upto the salary = 70:30 between the teachers and the university
 - iii) Money received beyond the salary = 50:50 between the teachers and the university

EXAMPLE:

A teacher drawing a salary of ₹ 2,00,000/- p.a. (Basic+DA+CCA), if granted permission to accept a consultancy or similar assignment receives consultancy money/honorarium etc. of ₹ 2,50,000/- in a particular year, the money received by her/him will be shared as under:

- i) Money received equivalent to first 30 % of the salary i.e., ₹ 60,000/-
= No sharing
- ii) Money received equivalent to next 70 % of the salary i.e., ₹ 140,000/- =
Teacher share : ₹ 98,000/-
University share: ₹ 42,000/-
- iii) Money received beyond the salary i.e., ₹ 50,000/- =
Teacher share : ₹ 25,000/-
University share: ₹ 25,000/-

Thus, out of the amount (₹ 2,50,000/-) received on account of above, the teacher's share will be ₹ 60000+98000+25000 i.e. ₹ 1,83,000/- and University will get ₹ 67,000/-

3. The following shall, however, not be construed as consultancy work for the purpose of regulating the fee received by an employee:
 - i) Fees received from recognized Universities and Research Institutions, statutory Bodies, Autonomous Bodies of Public Sector Undertakings wholly or substantially owned or controlled or funded/subsidized by Government for evaluation, selection, lectures and committee work;
 - ii) Amount received as awards/prizes in recognition of academic achievement;
 - iii) Income/honorarium/royalty from writing books, papers, articles and delivering occasional lectures on literary, cultural, artistic, technological and scientific subjects;
 - iv) Income for occasional participation in theatre, dance and music performances as well as occasional participation/curation of art exhibitions.
 - v) Income from occasional participation in sports, games and athletic activities as players, referees, umpires or managers of the teams.
4. All proposals concerning Consultancy Assignments, Directing of projects, patents, R&D products and technology transfers, etc. need the approval of the Vice Chancellor before they are submitted to the funding agencies.
5. These guidelines shall also be applicable to the non-teaching employees of the University who may undertake such assignments subject to the condition that the work related to these assignments will not be undertaken during office hours.

7. Appointments of Project Staff

- a) All posts in the sanctioned research projects are co-terminus.
- b) Prior approval for all the appointments against the sanctioned posts in respect of various projects shall be obtained from VC. The qualifications and scales of pay/consolidated pay for all the posts will be the same as those prescribed for the corresponding posts in the University. Any relaxation will require the prior approval of VC.
- c) For appointments to the posts under the Project, applications should be invited after giving wide publicity regarding the vacancies.
- d) The cases where the vacancies are for less than 6 months, such posts need not be advertised but should be circulated in the Departments of the University.
- e) In case the posts are for more than one year, the posts should be advertised in at least one national newspaper. The post should be

displayed on the website of the University for at least three weeks.

- f) The applications will be processed by the PI and the shortlisted candidates will be called for interview before selection committee. No TA/DA shall be paid to candidates called for interview for temporary employment in the project.
- g) There will be a regular Selection Committee for selection of the candidates. This committee, called the Project Appointment Committee (PAC), for each project shall consist of PI (Chairperson), Vice Chancellor's nominee, Head of the Department; Co-PI (if any) and one members of the teaching faculty of the concerned department. This committee shall be constituted in the beginning of the project by PI with the approval of VC and shall serve throughout the duration of the Project. The PAC shall recommend the appointments to the posts of Junior/Senior Research Fellows, Project Fellows, Research Assistants and all other Technical and non-technical staff. As regards to the posts of Research Scientists A, B and C, Research Associates and PDF, VC or her/his nominee shall be the Chairperson of the Selection Committee. Other members of Selection Committee for the scientific positions mentioned above shall be the Head of the Department concerned, the PI, Co-PI and two members, one from the Department and one from same field to be suggested by the PI and approved by the VC.
- h) The appointment letters shall be issued to the selected candidates by the Registrar. All appointment letters should clearly indicate the terms and conditions of appointment.
- i) Appointment of the above staff will be purely on temporary basis and for the duration of the project only and the appointed staff will have no claim for regular appointment in the University on the termination of project.
- j) The staff employed in the projects will be governed by the same rules and conditions of service as applicable to temporary employees in the University from time to time except in those projects where the conditions have been laid down by sponsoring body.
- k) The leave to the members of the staff under projects will be admissible to the same extent as its admissible to the corresponding employees of the University. The PI will be competent to sanction leave to the extent admissible.
- l) The joining report of the selected candidates should be countersigned by the PI and forwarded to the Registrar office. A copy may be retained by the PI.

8. Settlement of Bills

- a) The payment of bill and clearance of accounts is one of the most important aspects of smooth running projects. If Finance Office has procedural objection to a bill, it should be returned to the PI in a week's

time. Bills which are in order should be cleared and the whole process including the issue of cheques should be completed within two weeks of submission of bills. If the bill is not settled within two weeks from the date of submission, PI should report to the VC.

9. Maintenance of Stock Registers

- a) Each project should have separate stock register for assets, accession, consumable and non-consumable articles.
- b) Separate account should be opened for each article purchase on separate page with full particulars unless the transactions in respect of articles are small in number, in which case a page may be utilized for recording receipts and issue for more than one article provided the accounts in respect of different articles are not mixed up on that page.
- c) All entries in the stock book should be entered by the PI or Co-PI.
- d) Physical verification of stock should be conducted at least once in a year; the result thereof should be reported to the Finance Officer.
- e) Equipments purchased specifically for each project will be the property of the University on the termination of the project unless the sponsoring body desire otherwise.

10. Interim Progress and Accounts Reports of the Project

- a) The PI should prepare the Progress report along with the settlement of accounts which should be submitted to the concerned official in Finance Office looking after the project who would verify it within a week of submission of the accounts. On verification, the reports and accounts with a forwarding letter should be returned to the PI for onward transmission to the funding agency.

11. Final Technical Report of the Project

- a) Closure of the project should be done within six months of the completion of the project. The final technical and fiscal report should be prepared by the PI in accordance with the requirements of the funding agency.
- b) PI should make an open presentation of their Final Project Report along with detailed budget accounts including list of instrument purchased/installed before submission to the funding agency.
- c) PI should submit detailed budget accounts along with Final Project Report to the Finance Officer for verification of the financial aspects.

12. Closing of the Projects

- a) Statement of final accounts showing the year-wise receipts and expenditure and a list of articles (consumables and non-consumables)

left over at the time of termination of the project and purchased out of the project funds should be sent in triplicate to the Finance Office in the prescribed Performa, to be prepared separately by the Finance Office and verified by the Internal Audit Officer of the University. These articles may be transferred to the Department stock register except where the funding agencies do not allow the Department to retain the articles without paying them the book value of the articles. In case the Department does not want these articles, the same will be auctioned.

- b) The list will be given to Head of the Department for entering the permanent assets in the stock register of the Department within four weeks of the submission of the list. After entry into the Stock Register of the Department, the list with proper entry of the pages of the stock register in the Performa to be supplied by the Finance Office should be sent to Internal Audit Office for verification. It is mandatory for the Department to enter all items in stock register and to reissue them to the teacher concerned for her/his research and to take back into the stores the items the PI does not want to use. It is also mandatory for the Head of the Department to move the papers for writing off of any items which none of the teachers of the Department is willing to take and has been returned to the stores from the project.
- c) The PI and Head of the Department should ensure that all pieces of equipment which are obsolete/beyond repair are written off after following due process. The PIs/Teachers should give this in writing as soon as situation arises. In case of any missing item/component of the items falling under this category, the cost to be recovered from the PI/Teachers (when he needs no dues certificate) will be decided by VC in consultation with Head of the Department and FO.