

Revised Guidelines for PMRF

1. Background

The Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF) Scheme has been designed for improving the quality of research in various higher educational institutions in the country. With attractive fellowships, the scheme seeks to attract the best talent into research thereby realizing the vision of development through innovation. The scheme was announced in the Budget Speech 2018-19.

2. Eligibility

The applicants for the PMRF should have completed one of the following qualifications in the preceding three years from the date of submission of the application:

- a. completed or be pursuing the final year of four (or five) year undergraduate or five year integrated M.Tech or five year integrated M.Sc. or 2 year M.Sc. or five year undergraduate-postgraduate dual degree programs in Science and Technology streams from IISc/IITs/NITs/IISERs/IEST and centrally funded IITs. These candidates should have secured a CGPA/CPI of at least 8.0 (on a 10-point scale). For applicants in the five year integrated or dual degree programs, if separate CGPAs/CPIs are awarded for UG and PG parts of the program, the CGPA/CPI of UG part (first four year) will be considered.

OR

- b. completed or be pursuing the final year of four (or five) year undergraduate or five year integrated M.Tech or five year integrated M.Sc. or 2 year M.Sc. or five year undergraduate-postgraduate dual degree programs in Science and Technology streams from any other Institute/ University recognized in India, not covered in 2 (a) above. These candidates should have secured a minimum CGPA of 8 or equivalent apart from a minimum score of 750 in the respective GATE subject.

OR

- c. qualified GATE and be pursuing or have completed M.Tech. / MS by research at IISc/IITs/IISERs (hereafter referred to as host institutions) having a minimum CGPA or CPI of 8.0 (on a 10-point scale) at the end of the first semester with a minimum of four courses. Those candidates who are applying after the first semester, the CGPA or CPI

requirement of 8.0 will be based on all the courses, labs, thesis that the candidate has completed.

3. Contours of Project abstract by the eligible aspirants

- a. The Project abstract should articulate and display keen interest and insight on the subject chosen.
- b. The Project abstract should formulate a problem which could be used for assessing the applicant's analytical and research skills.
- c. The topic chosen should be in frontier areas of science and technology, preferably focusing on national priorities.
- d. There should be at least two referee names for each applicant for the Selection Committee to seek feedback from.

4. Appointment of Nodal Institutions (NIs)

- a. For each subject area, **one of the Host Institutions** would act as the Nodal Institute (NI).
- b. The NI will rotate once in two years.
- c. The National Coordination Committee (NCC) will decide on the NIs for the first two years.

5. Method of evaluation of the projects/applications

- a. A Central portal would be developed for submission of application by the candidates. This portal will automatically send the applications to the respective Nodal Institutes (NIs).
- b. The candidates should apply on this Portal, along with their Abstract within the time limit prescribed.
- c. Nodal Institute (NI) level – NI would constitute Reviewers consisting of subject matter experts to go through all the applications and shortlist candidates for interview.
- d. The Selection Committee for each discipline shall be constituted by the respective NI with representation of subject matter experts nominated by each IIT/IISc etc.
- e. The Selection Committee will interview shortlisted candidates within the time limits agreed. The interview could be conducted using video conferencing, if need be.
- f. The NCC can decide on having additional screening criteria, including Written Tests and/or Discussions, as the need be, in case of large number of applications.

6. Selection and Approval

The selection process for the PMRF will be a rigorous process consisting of Screening by the Reviewers, and final selection by the Selection Committee for each research vertical to ensure competition, standardization, transparency and selection of the best talent. The process may also include written test and/or discussions, if necessary. The allocation of Institute shall be done in the following manner:

- a. For each subject area, the Selection Committee constituted by the NI will select candidates after interview.
- b. The allocation of Institute for the doctoral study would be done by the Selection Committee, keeping in view the choices of the selected candidates and the availability of academic and other infrastructure.
- c. An appropriate procedure will be developed by the IITs/IISc/IISERs for selection of the candidates and linking them to potential guides.

7. Host Institutes

All IITs, IISERs and IISc shall be the Host Institutes where the PMRFs shall carry out their research/study. The Host Institutes shall take approval of their respective Senates for accepting the candidates selected for PMRF as per these guidelines, without any further process at the Institute level.

8. Deliverables

- a. At the time of joining, each Fellow shall be given deliverables to be achieved each year. This will be decided by the assigned guide and Department which the Fellow is joining.
- b. The deliverables are to be designed keeping in view the topic selected by the Fellow.
- c. There shall be an annual review of the performance of these Fellows by the host institution and the Fellowship for the following year shall be renewed only if the deliverables are achieved.
- d. Each Fellow is expected to teach once a week in a neighborhood ITI/Polytechnic/Engineering College, as per modalities approved by the Government.
- e. If the deliverables are not achieved, the fellowship could be brought down to the institutional fellowship level or even discontinued.

9. IPR

The IPR policy shall be as per the Institute's Policy on IPRs. The IPRs are owned by the Institution where the Fellow has worked.

10. Administration system

- a. National Coordination Committee (NCC): The NCC shall be the Apex Body concerned with implementation of the Scheme and shall be constituted by the MHRD.
- b. The National Coordinator (NC) will chair the NCC and shall be nominated by MHRD from one of the Host Institutes.
- c. The NCC shall comprise of 7-8 Heads of Host Institutes.
- d. The NCC will also be empowered to suggest changes in eligibility conditions, including CGPA etc. with detailed justification, for effective implementation of the scheme.
- e. The NCC will be fully empowered to decide the maximum and minimum number of research projects to be taken up under the Scheme in such a manner that there is balanced growth of research in each discipline.
- f. Nodal Institutions will have the following roles and responsibilities:
 - a. To receive, review and shortlist the candidates
 - b. To constitute the Selection Committees
 - c. To recommend the shortlisted candidates to the Selection Committees based on reviews/scrutiny.

11. Monitoring mechanism

The NCC will periodically review and monitor implementation of the scheme. The NCC will report to MHRD the status of the scheme, fund flow and utilization thereof, and policy changes, if any, required to make the scheme more effective. Apart from this, the monitoring will be done in the manner detailed below:

- a. There will be internal reviews twice a year.
- b. There will be a National Convention every year where all PMRFs will showcase their work. This will be an occasion for the Industry to participate in the Convention.
- c. There will be a website set up by the NCC showcasing the areas of work of each PMRF which will list all publications.

12. Financial Implications

- a. The following Administrative costs will be met from the Scheme funds:
 - (i) Cost of selection by the NIs
 - (ii) Cost of travel for the selections

- (iii) Cost of maintaining website and monitoring system
- (iv) Annual Convention Costs
- (v) Cost of meetings
- (vi) Cost incurred by the coordinating institute

b. An amount of Rs.5 Cr per year would be placed with the NCC for covering incidental costs related to the above.

c. The following would be the fellowship for the PMRFs:

Year	Amount (Rs)
Year 1	70,000
Year 2	70,000
Year 3	75,000
Year 4	80,000
Year 5	80,000

- d. Apart from this, each Fellow would be eligible for a research grant of Rs.2 lakhs per year (total Rs.10 lakh)
- e. The tenure of fellowship will be four years for students from integrated courses and five years for B. Tech (or equivalent) students. The selected students who have completed MTech/MS/ME after completing a qualifying B.Tech, and join PMRF will get 4 years of fellowship.
- f. Industry participation in the PMRF program would be explored through CSR funding or otherwise to enable industry to sponsor Fellows.
