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Frequently Asked Questions New Academic Projects

Q. How do I find the right area of projects to do ?

A. The NFP website has a list of areas of R&D interest in the field of fusion science & technology. There is also a frequently updated document listing project seeds which can be taken up by interested persons. If the person has an independent idea that he/she thinks can be taken up in the mentioned areas, please feel free to contact NFP.

Q. I have a project idea which does not directly seem to fit into the scheme of things as mentioned in the project seeds document. What do I do ?

A. Please feel free to contact NFP with your project idea. NFP will evaluate your idea and see how it can be appropriately modified to suit the needs of fusion R&D.

Q. Who can apply for NFP projects ?

A. Any person holding a permanent position in any Indian academic/R&D Institution other than those governed by DAE can submit a project proposal to BRFST.

Q. How can one apply for NFP projects ?

A. All NFP projects will be processed ONLY through the on-line portal of DAE-BRNS. However, before submission of the project to the BRNS portal, it is necessary to get approval of NFP.

Q. Can the project have many PI's ?

A. NO. The project can have only ONE Principal Investigator (PI), but can have multiple Co-PI's from the same or other institutions.

Q. Does the project need a coordinator from IPR ?

A. YES. At least one project coordinator from IPR is mandatory. NFP will help you find a suitable coordinator for your project proposal.

Q. Can the project have co-PI's from institutions outside India ?

A. As of now, NO.

Q. Can the project have a co-PI from an industry ?

A. Yes. However, in case of projects funds are being utilized by the industry as part of the project, separate budgeting needs to be done. Please contact NFP in such cases.

Q. Is there a time frame for the project tenure ?

A. Typical project tenure is between 1-3 years with scope for extensions (with and without financial implications) varying between 6-12 months as decided by the Committee.

Q. I have a background in theoretical plasma physics and I wish to take up experimental basic plasma R&D studies. How can NFP help ?

A. NFP believes in capability building activities wherein developing experimental plasma physics capability at the PI's institution is encouraged. If the PI does not have any

experience in experimental plasma physics, he/she may still submit a project proposal with the a co-PI who has experience in experimental plasma physics is included.

Q. When should I submit the project proposal ?

A. The PFRC Committee meets twice a year, mostly in March and August months of the year (tentatively). New project proposals should be received by NFP by **30th November or 30th May** in order to be considered for the March or August review meetings respectively. Proposals received after the respective deadlines will be automatically considered only for the next review (after 6 months).

Q. Can I submit more than one proposal ?

A. One PI is allowed to hold only ONE project under BRNS. PI can submit new project, but it will be sanctioned ONLY after the closure of the existing project with BRNS.

Q. How should the deliverables of the project be written ?

A. The deliverables of the project should be explicitly stated and should not be "open ended".

Q. Is there a budget ceiling for the project ?

A. YES. The PFRC committee can review/approve/sanction only projects with a net value of **Rs.35 Lakhs**. Projects of value 35-50 Lakhs can be reviewed by PFRC, and will be reviewed once again by a committee member of BRNS. Projects above 50 Lakhs will be reviewed a second time by the BRNS Committee.

Q. What can I use the "contingency" budget for ?

A. Contingency money can be used for procuring sundry items, books, accommodation charges, repairs of equipment, workshop charges and other non budgeted items required for the project. Contingency money cannot be used to pay any kind of salary.

Q. What can I use "consumable" budget for ?

A. While usage of this is left to the discretion of the PI, as a guideline, this budget can be used for items such as stationery, photocopy, printer toner, chemicals, etc for use in the project. Consumable budget cannot be used to pay any kind of salary.

Q. Can I budget for computers & accessories in my project ?

A. If the project explicitly requires the use of a dedicated computer, then yes. Adequate justification and the detailed specification of the computer needs to be provided (avoid using terms like "high end computer"). Purchase of laptop / color laser printer *etc.* will not be permitted. Purchase of office automation devices is also not permitted.

Q. What posts can I hire in the project ?

A. Project posts that are allowed by BRNST are ;

No.	Project Post	Salary (Rs. p.m.)	Essential Qualifications
i	Junior Research	Rs.25,000/- for 1st & 2nd year can be re-designation as SRF with a fellowship of Rs.28,000/- after	Fresh M.Sc/BE/B.Tech

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	Fellow (JRF)	completion of 2 years and successful completion of a review by an expert committee.	
ii	Senior Research Fellow (SRF)	Rs.28,000/- for 1st & 2nd year, Rs.30,000/- from 3rd year after successful completion of review.	MTech / ME or M.Sc./BE/BTECH + 2 years' experience
iii	Research Associate (RA)	Rs.36,000-40,000/- based on experience	Ph.D in Science or MTech/ME with 2 years' experience
iv	Technical Assistant	Rs.10,000/- pm	As required by the PI

The appointed candidate should be NET/GATE qualified, and/or should have 1st Class in qualifying examination. For positions (i) and (ii), qualification in any NET exam is also sufficient. The PI has to specify the required qualifications (for *example.*, M.Sc. in material science, M.Tech. in mechanical engineering *etc.*). In projects more than 2 years, JRF can become SRF after completion of 2 years and successful completion of a review. PI has to make appropriate adjustments in the salary budget head to account for this.

The advertisement for the selection of project staff has to also be uploaded on the BRNS website. The selection committee should also have a representative of IPR who can be present in person or via video conferencing.

In addition to the salary, the staff appointed is also entitled to House Rent Allowance (HRA) and Medical Allowance (MA) as per PI's institute/university rules. However while applying for funding, only the salary component should be shown. Once the project is approved, PI can raise the bill and claim the amounts for HRA/Medical from BRNS separately.

Q. Can I employ scientific / technical /Lab assistants/secretary/clerk etc in the project ?

A. YES. Technical assistance may be allowed on a case-to-case basis. The PI needs to justify the requirement. Lab assistant.secretary/clerk etc is not permitted.

Q. I need to fabricate certain items related to my project. How can I budget them ?

A. For project related fabrication costs, the budget can be included under "Technical Assistance".

Q. Some of the tests required as part of my project are not available in my laboratory/Institute. How can I get them done ?

A. PFRC has a budget head named "Technical Assistance" which is meant for these situations. The PI may budget appropriate amounts wherein services outside his/her institution have to be hired to carry out the tests required for the project. Appropriate justification is required for this budget head.

Q. What is the typical budget allowed under "Travel"

A. Travel budget is subject to location of the PI's institution vis-a-vis IPR and also on the requirement of the project .Travel budget cannot be typically more than Rs. 1.00 Lakh/year for a project. Final sanctioned amount will be at the discretion of the Committee.

Q. What is the typical budget allowed under Contingency / Consumables ?

A. Typically for non-experimental projects, the combined value of these two budgets cannot be more than Rs. 1.00 Lakh/year. For experimental projects, this combined amount can be up to Rs.2.00 Lakhs/ year. In cases where consumables are higher, the Committee will consider it based on the need and justification.

Q. Can I travel abroad using the project funds ?

A. NO. The PI can use the project travel funds ONLY for travel within India.

Q. What is Institutional Overheads ?

A. Institutional overhead can be a MAXIMUM of 15 % of the total sanctioned budget (Excluding Contingency amount) which is provided to the host institution in order that basic amenities such as laboratory, electricity, lab assistants etc are provided for the tenure of the project. However, the upper limit of this amount is Rs. 5 Lakhs for institutes/Universities and 2 lakhs for Industry projects.

Q. Can I use Project funds for infrastructure development of my lab ?

A. NO. Since BRNS pays a percentage of the total project fund as Institutional overheads, infrastructural items like building, furnishing, air conditioning, UPS, non-scientific and administrative staff etc have to be provided by the PI's Institute.

Q. The project requires fabrication and also procurement of materials. How do i budget these items ?

A. The PI may add appropriate amounts to budget heads of "Technical Assistance" for fabrication and "Consumables" for materials.

Q . What documents need to be submitted to PFRC during submission of the project proposal ?

A. All documents required are to be submitted online to the BRNS web portal <https://daebrns.gov.in>

Q. How long does it take from project submission to possible sanction of project funds ?

A. After the review meeting is over, BRNS can take a few months to first issue the Sanction Letter and then followed by the first installment of the the project funds. PI can contact BRNS for updates on release of sanction letter / funds.

Q. I have been invited to attend the review meeting. Will I be provided TA/ accommodation ?

A. YES. As you have been invited to attend the review, you will be paid TA as per your entitlement and shared accommodation will also be provided at no cost. Only the PI will be provided with TA and accommodation.

Q. Due to certain unavoidable circumstances, I will not be able to attend the review meeting. What alternate options do i have ?

A. It is mandatory for the PI of the project to attend the review meetings. The dates of the review meetings are announced well in advance and if in doubt, the PI may always contact NFP. In the event that the PI is not able to attend the review meeting, the project will automatically be removed from that review meeting and will be included in the subsequent review meeting.

Q. Can the Co-PI of the project also attend the meeting ?

A. Of course Yes. However, only the PI will be provided TA and free accommodation.

Q. What is the project review process ?

A. The project submitted by the PI is reviewed by external referees and it is mandatory that at least 3/5 referees give at least 70/100 marks for the project to be considered for review. During the review, the PI is required to make a 10 minute presentation with the main slides for (1) motivation for the work (2) Work details and schedule (3) Deliverables (4) Equipment / staff (5) Budget. PI is also requested to ensure that he/she completes the presentation well within the prescribed time.

Q. The review dates are 10-11 August and my review is scheduled on 10th August. Do I have to be present on both days of the review . Do I have to be present on both days of the review ?

A. NFP encourages that the PI be present at the venue on both the days of the review so that there is more interaction between the PI and the IPR coordinator of the project in order that the project progresses smoothly.

Q. What are the modes of travel allowed by NFP to attend the review meeting ?

A. The PI has to travel by AIR INDIA only. Any exemption to this has to be obtained by the PI from the appropriate authorities designated by DGCA. For bus travel, the agency should be recognized by the government. Ticket/travel receipt is mandatory for claiming any travel allowance, including taxi fare.

Q. What documents should I submit to claim TA ?

A. The PI has to submit the following TA related documents in original at the time of the review (1) Ticket showing fare (2) Boarding pass (3) Filled TA application form (4) Filled RTDS fund transfer form (5) Copy of cancelled cheque of PI's account.

The TA reimbursement will be done ONLY by bank transfer and can take 2-3 weeks after the date of the review.

Q. I am arriving by flight AI-241 from Delhi at 21:00. Will NFP arrange for my pick-up from the airport?

A. No. NFP does not provide airport / railway station pickup or drop off. The PI will have to call the hotel and arrange for the same at your cost. However, transportation from the designated hotel(s) to the venue of the review meeting will be provided on all the days of the meeting.

New Industry Projects

Q. Do all the rules for projects to academic institutions apply to Industry projects also ?

A. Yes. Additionally, the industry should have obtained DSIR registration (or at least should have applied for registration). <http://www.dsir.gov.in>

Q. What is the typical tenure of the industry project ?

A. Minimum 1 year.

Q. What is the typical budget for industry projects ?

A. Typically the budget for an industry project should be under Rs.35 Lakhs.

Q. I would need a few equipment for carrying out my project. Can I purchase instruments / equipment ?

A. It is presumed that the Industry proposing a project already has the basic infrastructure for undertaking the project. However, if the committee feels that a certain equipment / instrument is essential for the project, it could be granted. However, at the end of the project, all equipment purchased under the project will have to be returned to IPR along with the deliverables.

Q. I find that in order to ship the project deliverables to IPR, I have to pay transport charges, taxes, insurance etc.. Will these amounts be reimbursed by IPR?

A. The PI of the industry project has to foresee such expenses and include them in the budget at the time of proposing the project. No additional payment for such items will be done once the project is sanctioned.

Q. I wish to take a patent on the work that was carried out under the BRFSST sanctioned project. What are the norms ?

A. These Intellectual Property Rights cases are dealt with by NFP on a case-to-case basis. In a broad sense, the PI can take a patent, which will be in the name of the IPR coordinator. The patent can then be assigned by NFP to the PI for financial exploitation. IPR's procedures on patents will have to be followed.

Q. Will I be provided travel / accommodation if my project is selected for review presentation ?

A. Yes. The same rules for PI's from academic institution applies.

Q. I am not a person with science / engineering background and hence I am unsure about making a presentation to a scientific evaluation board. What to do ?

A. In such cases, the IPR coordinator of your project can make the presentation. However, the PI WILL have to be present at the review to answer the Board's questions (if any).

Contact NFP

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