



**Department of Science and Technology
Ministry of Science and Technology
Government of India**

**Post-Offer Implementation Guidelines of INSPIRE
Faculty Fellowship Component**

Under



**Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research
(INSPIRE)**

This document provides INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship implementation guidelines under the INSPIRE Scheme of the Department of Science and Technology (DST).

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) reserves the right to review and modify these guidelines as and when required.

INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship (IFF) Guidelines

A) Purpose

1. To provide attractive opportunities to young achievers for developing independent scientific profiles and launch them towards fulfilling long-term careers.
2. To augment high-quality scientific manpower in scientific and educational institutions, especially the Central and State universities.
3. While vertical migration from the other INSPIRE components would be encouraged, Faculty Fellowship component also provides opportunity to meritorious candidates for lateral entry in INSPIRE scheme.
4. INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship provides an opportunity to doctorates for carrying out independent research however, it does not guarantee a regular position after 5 years.

B) Eligibility

Essential:

1. Indian citizens and People of Indian origin with PIO status having Ph.D. degree (in science, mathematics, engineering, pharmacy, medicine and agriculture related subjects) from any recognized university in the world.
2. Candidates should possess a minimum of 60% (or equivalent CGPA) marks throughout their academic profile starting from the Senior Secondary Examination (Class 12 onwards).
3. Those that have submitted their Ph.D. thesis and are awaiting the award of degree shall also be eligible. However, selection for the Fellowship will be confirmed only after the Ph.D. degree is awarded.
4. The upper age limit as on 1st January of the respective year of advertisement, is 32 years for General Category. However, for SC, ST and Women candidates, the upper age limit will be 37 years. For persons with benchmark disabilities (Divyangjan with not less than 40 percent of a specified disability), the upper age limit will be 42 years.
5. Publication(s) in highly reputed journals demonstrating outstanding research potential of the candidate.
6. Those applicants who apply by choosing the new subject area 'Translational Research in S&T' need to have at least two patents filed or one patent granted to their credit.
7. In case, 'Translational Research in S&T' is chosen as subject area of research work, the research proposal must clearly outline the novelty of the deep-tech idea, the breakthroughs that the idea can create, the technology problems it can solve, the markets it can address, and its commercialization potential. (For details FAQs may be seen).
8. In case of selection under the new subject area 'Translational Research in S&T', it is mandatory that the Host institution must be chosen as those S&T institutions which have a Central/State Govt supported Technology Business Incubators (TBIs), so that the deep-tech research can be mentored and carried out in conjunction with the TBI. (For reference, applicants may visit <https://www.nstedb.com/List-NSTEDB-TBIs.htm>).

9. Candidates who are employed in regular/contractual positions in India may also apply for INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship for improvement and enhancement in their career prospects but, upon selection, the candidates will need to resign (no lien or deputation or any type of leave would be accepted) from the current job and organization before taking up the INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship. Candidates who get selected for regular position in any institute/university after submission of IFF application, would be entitled to receive the Research Grant only as INSPIRE Faculty Fellows.

Desirable:

10. Candidates who are within top 1% in Class 12 examination, IIT-JEE rank holders, NEET etc., 1st rank holders either in graduation or post-graduation level university examinations.

C) Mode of Application

1. Eligible candidates need to submit applications ONLINE through the portal of INSPIRE Scheme only. No other mode of submission of the application is permitted.

2. To apply ONLINE, please visit the website: <https://online-inspire.gov.in> and follow the process described therein. After successful submission of the application online, the candidate may obtain a printout of the application and keep it for his/her personal reference.

Candidate may also note the generated application reference number and IVR number for future references.

D) Method of Selection

A three-tier selection process, viz. evaluation by discipline-based Expert Committees, followed by the recommendations of Apex Level Committee and INSPIRE Faculty Award Council. Based on the recommendations of these Committees, DST makes the final selection. Indian National Science Academy (INSA), New Delhi will provide the assistance in the selection process.

E) Amount and Duration of INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship

1. Each selected INSPIRE Faculty Fellow will be eligible to receive a consolidated amount of Rs.1,25,000/- per month as fellowship with annual increment of Rs. 2,000/-. In addition, a Research Grant of Rs.7,00,000/- every year (12 months) for 5 years (60 months) will also be provided to each successful candidate. The consolidated amount of Rs.1,25,000/- per month is an all-inclusive fellowship and taxable as per the Indian IT Act.

2. The INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship is for a maximum period of 5 (five) years. No Fellow shall avail two fellowships concurrently during the tenure of this Fellowship period.

F) Issue of Offer Letter

1. The INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship Offer Letter is issued through the web portal (<https://online-inspire.gov.in>).

2. Selected candidates, who have not identified host institutions at the application stage,

should do it immediately after their final selection. Selected candidates should avail the INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship within 3 months from the date of issue of the Offer Letter. Otherwise, the Offer may get forfeited.

3. A selected candidate, who is yet to be awarded the Ph.D. degree, will receive intimation for submission of his/her Ph.D. degree certificate within 3 months to avoid forfeiting the opportunity. Upon submission of the Ph.D. degree certificate, the Offer Letter will be issued to the candidate through web portal with 3 months' validity to undertake the fellowship at the chosen Host Institution.

- It may be noted that time taken to submit Ph.D. Degree Certificate will be counted towards the time duration given for joining the host institution for implementation of IFF. Faculty fellows are advised not to delay the submission of Ph.D. Degree Certificate in the portal.

4. Selected candidates are advised not to choose the Institution from where they have obtained their Ph.D. degree or undertaken their Ph.D. or post-doctoral work, if any.

5. Selected INSPIRE Faculty Fellows joining private academic/research institutes shall receive only the Research Grant and their host institutions will have to pay the fellowship amount as per INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship component norms.

G) Terms and Conditions for Implementation

1. The date of physical joining of the Inspire Faculty Fellowship at the Indian host institute would be considered as date of start of Fellowship. Date of issue of first installment sanction order will be considered as date of initial joining for employed fellows claiming only the research grant.

2. All selected fellows are advised to choose only academic/research institutions suitable to take up the research objectives proposed and not to choose departments/organizations of administrative nature.

3. A provision exists for hiring research staff out of the Research Grant during the Fellowship tenure of 5 years as per the rule & regulations of host institution.

4. In the event of getting transfer elsewhere in the country, the Fellow will also be allowed to move the research student, equipment, consumables etc., along with him/her to the new Host Institute with prior consent of both the institutions.

5. The annual Research grant is Rs. 7,00,000/- per year. Release of Research funds shall be made as per revised funds flow mechanism implemented by Government of India through CNA Model from Financial year 2022-23 through Office Memorandum F.No.1(18)/PFMS/FCD/2021 dated 09.03.2022 and the subsequent directions received from time to time regarding implementation of CNA.

6. As per the CNA Model, grant provided to INSPIRE Faculty Fellows **should be utilized within the same financial year** in which it has been released. There may not be any provision of carrying forward of unspent Research Grant to next financial year.

7. Fellows as well as their host institute(s) are advised to visit the Notice Board of INSPIRE Web portal and take note of notices/information available there and implement it timely within the duration of INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship so that fellows get sufficient time period available with them to utilize the grant.

8. Research Grant of Rs.7,00,000/- per year is utilized in various sub-heads: Manpower, Equipment, Consumables (including chemicals), Travel, Contingency and Overhead.

- The expenditure under the sub-heads Travel, Contingency & Overhead is limited to 10% (i.e. Rs. 70,000/- per year), 10% (i.e. Rs. 70,000/- per year) & 5% (i.e. Rs. 35,000/- per year) respectively. Faculty Fellows have inter-operational flexibility of using the research grant in any manner without any fixed limits in all other budget heads except Travel, Contingency & Overhead.
- Under the sub-heads of Travel/ Contingency, INSPIRE faculty fellows can utilize the Research Grant in the following way:
 - i. INSPIRE faculty fellows can utilize the unspent grant available under Travel sub-head to other sub-heads while keeping the max limit to 10% in Travel sub-head each year.
 - ii. INSPIRE faculty fellows can utilize the unspent grant available under Contingency sub-head to other sub-heads while keeping the max limit to 10% in Contingency sub-head each year.
 - iii. Overhead will remain limited to 5% of the total Research Grant each year.

9. Every Faculty Fellow needs to provide budget estimates with year-wise detailed break-up under various Heads such as manpower cost, consumables (including chemicals), travel, contingency, overhead costs etc. and non-recurring cost such as equipment for utilization of the Research Grant to DST-INSPIRE Programme Division along with joining documents.

10. In case Fellows who have joined the Indian host institution leave/quit the Scheme prematurely within 6 months of his/her joining, he/she needs to forego his/her Fellowship as well as the Research Grant amount for the said duration.

11. Fellows will be eligible to undertake visits to any international Laboratory/ University/ Institute for further exposure and training and to carry out research activities up to a maximum period of 18 months in multiple slots during the 5 years of fellowship. The application to visit countries abroad will be considered only after availing 12 months of INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship tenure and the visit should preferably to a place other than his or her Ph.D./post-doctoral place. This period will be treated as part of the Fellowship period. In the event of receiving sustenance allowance from the visiting Institute/ University/ Laboratory, the Faculty fellow may not be eligible for availing the Fellowship amount during the visit period.

12. Fellows will be required to visit the web portal for uploading the annual financial documents and Annual Progress Report to the DST-INSPIRE Programme Division. Mid-term/periodic performance evaluation will be done by national-level Expert Committees. Participation in the performance evaluation is mandatory and continuation of support to any Fellow shall depend upon the performance assessment by the Expert Committees.

13. Fellows shall administratively be governed by the prevailing rules and regulations of the Host Institution, especially regarding all types of leave and other administrative matters.

14. Fellows are required to take prior approval of host institution for short term visit up to 8 weeks/2months for attending conference/training/seminar/collaborative research work etc. in country or abroad and inform DST. Visits to undertake scientific work for more than 8 weeks would require prior permission from DST.

15. In case an INSPIRE Faculty, Fellow finds a permanent position during the tenure of the Fellowship, the fellowship amount shall be discontinued from the day the INSPIRE Faculty Fellow joins the permanent position, but he/she may continue with the INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship Scheme availing Research Grant for the remaining period to carry out research while occupying the new position.

16. The INSPIRE Faculty Fellow is eligible to apply for any competitive grant from various funding agencies during the tenure of the INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship.

H) Transfer or Change of Host Institution (including absorption)

1. Transfer or Change of Host Institution is permissible under the Scheme either upon getting:
 - i) permanent employment in another Institution; ii) or for any other valid reason.
2. In all such cases, the Faculty Fellow needs to inform the DST-INSPIRE Programme Division immediately with the following documents to effect the change and smooth facilitation of transfer of funds etc.
 - Appointment Letter of permanent employment or justification for change of Host Institution.
 - NOC from the present Host Institute and Acceptance Letter from the new Host Institute.
 - Joining Letter from the new Host Institute due to transfer or permanent employment (either same or different Host Institution),
 - Fresh signed copy of the Undertaking (not required in case of permanent employment in the same Host Institution),
 - Up-to-date financial documents from the present Host Institute (also in case of permanent employment in the same Host Institute).
3. The INSPIRE Faculty Fellow may be allowed to change the Host Institution only once during tenure of Fellowship. However, this condition may be relaxed in case INSPIRE Faculty Fellow finds a permanent position in any institution other than host institution. Time taken in transfer process is included in total tenure (5 years) of fellowship.
4. Only after the due approval of host transfer by DST, fellows may transfer their equipment bought under the IFF research grant to the new host Institution.
5. Fellows are expected to adhere to the proposed research objectives given in original proposal. In case of deviation from proposed objectives in the research proposal, the same may be intimated to DST timely along with proper justification for the deviation. In such cases, fellows should try to complete original objectives in addition to new objectives undertaken by fellow.

I) Role and requirements of Host Institutions

1. Host institutions are expected to provide congenial atmosphere to INSPIRE Faculty Fellows to enable them to excel in their work and should view them as potential assets for faculty development. It is desirable if the host institutes introduce new areas/directions of research through this Scheme.
2. Under no circumstances the “INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship” is renewable after 5 years. Host institutions are expected to consider the “INSPIRE Faculty Fellows” for permanent positions in due course, subject to their meeting institutional performance assessment criteria.
3. Host institutes should provide acceptable laboratory and office space (independently or on shared basis), ensure access to all common infrastructural facilities, computing facilities, library etc., to the INSPIRE Faculty Fellows. Host institutions are expected to encourage INSPIRE Faculty Fellows to publish high quality research as first/corresponding author in the list of researchers. Host institutes are also expected to facilitate INSPIRE Faculty Fellows in translation of research work towards commercialization to the extent possible.
4. Host institutes should provide information on whether the INSPIRE Faculty Fellow will be allowed to supervise Ph.D. students, hire research fellows, independently or jointly with a permanent faculty member, while hosting the Faculty Fellows.
5. Host institutions need to ensure that teaching workload given to IFF does not compromise

their research objectives.

6. Host institution may issue experience certificates to faculty fellows for the duration of INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship availed in the institute, mentioning their research and teaching assignments, which may help them while applying for regular positions in future.

J) Completion of Faculty Fellowship Tenure:

To settle the Faculty Fellowship grant upon completion/resignation, INSPIRE Faculty Fellow shall upload all necessary documents in his/her INSPIRE Web-Portal account such as:

1. Final Technical Report in prescribed format.
2. List of Equipment procured during Faculty fellowship in prescribed format.
3. Performance Report in prescribed format.
4. Final Statement of Expenditure (SE) and Year-wise Utilization certificate (UC) for the Faculty fellowship duration in prescribed format.

After final settlement of accounts and completion of INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship tenure, "Completion Certificate" will be provided by DST. It can be downloaded from INSPIRE portal.

K) Duties of INSPIRE Faculty Fellow:

1. Faculty Fellow is responsible for the timely submission of SE/UC and prudent expenditure of their research grant as per the GFR rules.
2. Faculty fellows are expected to complete the research objectives and to remain focused from the beginning to establish themselves as domain experts by good quality publications and network collaborations.
3. Faculty Fellows are advised to develop and maintain a good rapport with the host institute.
4. DST should be updated regarding the Research progress made including the publications during Faculty fellowship tenure.
5. The INSPIRE Faculty Fellow must acknowledge the support provided by DST in all the publication(s)/patent(s) and Ph.D. Thesis of their students.
6. INSPIRE Faculty Fellows are required to do final settlement of accounts of their completed duration of INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship.
