



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

**Post-Offer Implementation Guidelines for
Fellowship Holders**

of

**INSPIRE Fellowship
Component**

Under



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

This document provides INSPIRE 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 Fellowship Guidelines

(these new guidelines will be applicable w. e. f November 2023 onwards)

Mode of Application:

Online through INSPIRE web portal <https://www.online-inspire.gov.in>

Online Selection Process:

Two-tier selection process i.e. screening of eligible applications by an Internal Committee, followed by final selection through an Expert Committee. However, the selection process will be expected to complete within 6 months from the last date of submission of application/requisite documents and the result (provisional/final offer/Rejection) of the selection process will be communicated to individual selected candidate through online web-portal (www.online-inspire.gov.in) only. The result shall be uploaded on the respective applicant's INSPIRE Web-portal account only.

In case, INSPIRE Fellowship application is not recommended for support at Level-2 Evaluation, applicant(s) can request for re-evaluation of their application(s) within 45 days from the date of issue of the letter. The re-evaluation would be done only on the existing application including Research Proposal available on his/her INSPIRE web-portal. Reevaluation requests shall be submitted through online INSPIRE web-portal <https://online-inspire.gov.in/Account/reevaluation>. Applicants are advised to provide their research work updates only in the Remarks column provided.

Eligibility:

- i) 1st Rank Holders in any recognized University and academic Institutions (Excluding Autonomous Colleges) in India in Post-Graduate (PG) level examination in Basic/Applied Sciences including Engineering, Pharmacy, Agricultural sciences and Veterinary Sciences. 1st Rank Holders at the Graduate/Post-graduate Level Examination in Medicine only conducted by a University/ Institution in India are eligible to apply. 1st Rank should be obtained in university in basic/applied science subject course/program having batch size of minimum **07** students with minimum aggregate of 70% marks (or CGPA equivalent) for the entire course/ program.

OR

- ii) **INSPIRE Scholar** having secured minimum 70% marks in aggregate or equivalent CGPA at M.Sc. or Integrated M.S./ M.Sc. course.

However, merely fulfilling the eligibility criteria for the INSPIRE Fellowship will not guarantee for the final offer of fellowship. Subject Expert Committee (SEC) will finally recommend the applications for award of INSPIRE Fellowship considering the academic merit, research proposal, supervisor's research credentials and host institution etc. parameters on competitive basis.

Terms and Conditions:

1. General

- a. This Fellowship shall be available only for pursuing full-time Ph.D. program in any

recognized University / Institution/ R&D Laboratory in the country.

- b. The Junior Research Fellow (JRF) or Senior Research Fellow (SRF) under this scheme shall be termed as '**INSPIRE Fellow**'. The Fellowship shall be governed through the Office Memorandum of this Ministry of Number A.20020/11/97-IFD dated 6th August 2007; 31st March 2010; 21st October 2014 [No. SR/S9/Z-09/2012], SR/S9/Z-08/2018 dated 30th January 2019 and DST/PCPM/Z-06/2022 dated 26th June 2023 shall be liable to be revised from time to time as per Government Order. However, HRA to the Fellows shall also be applicable as per GoI norms, depending upon the location of the Host Institution.
- c. The Fellowship shall be tenable for a maximum period of five years or completion of the Ph.D. program (i.e. till the final defend of the Ph.D. Thesis), whichever is earlier.

2. Issue of Fellowship Offer:

- a. Availing multiple (more than one) fellowships concurrently from different sources shall not be allowed.
- b. In case INSPIRE Fellow is availing any other fellowship prior to INSPIRE Fellowship, the Effective Date of availing INSPIRE Fellowship would be as under:

Fresh applicants who have already taken admission in Ph.D. course prior to submission of application, the date of acceptance or joining or switching over from any other fellowship to INSPIRE Fellowship will be the Effective Date. However, in any case the Effective Date shall not be earlier than the date of application received at the DST.

- c. Applicant who will be selected under “Provisional Selection” category and subsequently issued “Final Offer” by getting admission into Ph.D. course, the “Effective Date” would be **the date of uploading of documents** related to confirmed Ph.D admission or **date of Ph.D. admission**, whichever is later. However, in case the candidate is already availing some other fellowship and resigns to join INSPIRE Fellowship, the “Effective Date” would only be after the date of resignation. In no case, the candidate would be allowed to resign from other fellowship before the date of Final Offer of INSPIRE Fellowship. For Final selection under INSPIRE Fellowship, the admission into Ph.D. program is necessary.
- d. Upon Final INSPIRE Fellowship selection, the Fellow or the Host-Institution / University shall inform DST about the 'date of joining' of the INSPIRE Fellow, by uploading the Joining- cum-Acceptance Letter (JCA) (as per the format available on candidate's web-portal account) on the online portal within one month from the date of issue of final offer, failing which, his/her Final Offer will be liable for cancellation and no further correspondence shall be entertained in this regard.

3. Change of Host Institute:

Since the final selection to offer INSPIRE Fellowship has the weightage on Research Proposal and type of Host Institute, Fellows are advised to firm up carefully both the Research Proposal and Host Institute before uploading such documents to the INSPIRE Web portal. Considering these, once the Final Offer is made by DST-INSPIRE, the INSPIRE Fellow shall not be allowed to transfer the Fellowship to any other University/ Institute / Laboratory in the country or change of Research Proposal during 5 years of Fellowship tenure in any circumstances, except in extraordinary circumstances such as dislocation due to marriage (for a female candidate), demise of present

Research Supervisor, proven case of sexual harassment etc. Even in such cases, the new Research Proposal and new Host Institute need to be evaluated again for consideration of any change and the outcome of evaluation by the Subject Expert Committee shall be binding to the Fellow. In case the change is acceptable due to any of the reasons mentioned above, the Fellow must seek prior permission from the DST-INSPIRE Program Division for such change of Host Institution by submitting the following documents:

- No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from the respective Host Institutes and Research Supervisors,
- Detailed Justifications for change/transfer of Host Institute for implementation of Fellowship,
- Ph.D. Research area with an up-to-date Technical Progress Report,
- CV of the Research Supervisor at the new Host Institute,
- Up to date Financial Statement of Expenditure from the initial Host Institute (in case the fellowship grant has been released to the initial host Institute of the INSPIRE Fellow).

However, transfer of Host Institute or change of Research Proposal without prior written permission from DST-INSPIRE may be called for the termination of the INSPIRE Fellowship. In case, a fellow does this at his/ her own discretion without prior permission/ approval, DST-INSPIRE shall not be liable for continuation of his/her INSPIRE Fellowship. Moreover, such shifting/ change of Host Institute may be allowed only once in 5 years of Fellowship tenure and that too within one year from the “Effective Date” of Fellowship at the respective Host Institute.

4. Short-Term Research Internship:

- a. INSPIRE Fellow shall be allowed to avail short-term Research Internship at any national or international Laboratory/ University/ Institute for a maximum duration of 18 months either in single or in multiple slots during the 5 years tenure of Fellowship. This research internship would either be arranged by DST or by the individual Fellow. Fellow shall obtain prior permission from DST-INSPIRE on the recommendation of Ph.D. Supervisor as well as confirmation from Research Internship provider. In case the Fellow receives full financial support for the internship from the overseas institution(s), the INSPIRE Fellowship for the period of Overseas stay will not be remitted.
- b. After availing the Research Internship, the Fellow must submit his/her Internship Report as well as Joining Report to Host Institution, with intimation to DST. Positioning under JSPS-HOPE Program shall be dealt in separately.

5. Release of Fellowship:

- a. Fellowship grant for the INSPIRE Fellow(s) shall be released to their respective Host institutions by the Department of Science & Technology, New Delhi. Payment of the Fellowship along with Contingency Grant, will be as per Government of India and Institute/University norms. To receive Fellowship grant, Host institute(s) need to have a Zero-balance A/c [Preferable Name of A/c: Organization Name-STIHCB (1817) Scheme] to operate as a Sub Agency A/c at an

institutional level (i.e. respective institute/organization) in Bank of Maharashtra and get mapped the ZBSA in PFMS (Public Finance Management System: <https://www.pfms.nic.in>). Institute will operationalize the new process for flow of fund through ZBSA at Bank of Maharashtra for utilization of the Fellowship grant.

- b. For Fellowship release in the subsequent years, the Host-Institute or the concerned fellow shall submit the financial year-wise Statement of Expenditure & Utilization Certificate (through online portal: www.online-inspire.gov.in for each of the INSPIRE Fellow. Each INSPIRE Fellow shall submit Annual Progress Report duly authenticated by their concerned Ph.D. supervisor.
- c. Second installment onwards release to an ongoing Fellow will be considered if the unspent balance from the previously released Fellowship grant including HRA shall be less than Rs.40,000/-.

6. For JRF to SRF upgradation Guidelines, please visit link Revised guidelines for upgradation from JRF to SRF on INSPIRE online portal www.online-inspire.gov.in

7. Completion of Fellowship Tenure or Award of Ph.D. degree:

I. To settle the fellowship grant upon completion of the tenure of Fellowship, INSPIRE Fellow shall upload the following documents in his/her INSPIRE Web-Portal account:

- a. A copy of the Ph.D. degree certificate,
- b. Ph.D. completion/discontinuation report,
- c. Statement of Expenditure (SE) and Utilization certificate (UC) of complete fellowship duration,
- d. Unspent balance receipt if any (unspent balance and other earnings against the released grant (if any), shall be remitted to the consolidated Fund of India (through Non-Tax Receipt Portal (NTRP) i.e., www.bharatkosh.gov.in).

II. Soft copy of the Ph.D. thesis, published research papers and patent details if any shall be submitted in USB storage device to the INSPIRE Programme Division of DST by speed post.

III. INSPIRE Fellows must settle their claims within one year of leaving the Fellowship. No claim will be admitted by DST after one year of leaving the Fellowship.

8. Termination or Discontinuation of INSPIRE Fellowship shall occur in the following situations:

- a. Non-acceptance of Final Offer within 30 days from the date of issue of Final Offer;
- b. Upon successful completion of Ph.D. viva-voce or 5years of INSPIRE Fellowship tenure, whichever is earlier;
- c. Resignation from the Fellowship before awarding Ph.D. degree based on the Research Supervisor's recommendation and upon acceptance of resignation by DST as per the terms and conditions detailed in point 7 above;
- d. Change of host institution without prior approval of DST;
- e. In case, INSPIRE Fellow is found ineligible at any stage including submission of incorrect information/document(s)/application, any unintentional computer error or printer's devil etc.;

- f. In case of termination of fellowship on unethical ground(s) INSPIRE Fellow is liable to refund the complete released INSPIRE Fellowship grant along with interest.

9. Duties of INSPIRE Fellow:

- a. Keep DST updated regarding the Research progress made during fellowship tenure.
- b. INSPIRE Fellow shall not take any paid or unpaid assignment other than related to his/her approved research program. However, if required, the fellow may assist the host institute in its academic activities as per Ph.D. program guidelines governed by the Host Institution, provided such assignments shall not hamper the progress of research work of the fellow.
- c. Once the INSPIRE Fellow joins the Fellowship, he/she shall complete the research work within the 5 years tenure of fellowship to achieve the approved objectives of the research problem.
- d. The INSPIRE Fellow must acknowledge the support provided by DST in all the publication(s)/patent(s) and Ph.D. Thesis.
- e. Soft copy of the Ph.D. thesis published research papers and patent details if any shall be submitted in USB storage device to the INSPIRE Programme Division of DST by speed post.
- f. DST needs to be informed about any disciplinary action taken by the University against INSPIRE Fellow.
