

GUIDELINES FOR THE SCHEME OF RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT FOR FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY

1. INTRODUCTION

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has been established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 as a statutory body for laying down science based standards for articles of food and for regulating manufacturing, processing, storage, distribution, sale and import of food so as to ensure and availability safe and wholesome food for human consumption. Authority proposes to support research projects and related innovative R&D proposals (as identified by the Authority) pertaining to food safety and quality control by extending financial assistance to various Institutions/Universities, public funded organizations and recognized R&D laboratories both in public and private sectors and Non-Governmental Organizations. The Authority may contract research groups and institutions to address specific problem / issues aimed at the background evidence on which it can base its policy. The strategy of the Authority aims at using of science to support its policy and objectives whether through secondary information, expertise and advice or through generation of new information by funding of specific well identified studies.

2. OBJECTIVES

Objective of the scheme is that the outcome / findings of R&D will ensure food safety and promotion of safety standards in the food sector. The work is focused for helping the Authority in better understanding the related food safety issues and to meet its policy aims and objectives.

3. ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS

All recognized universities, IITs, Central/State Government Institutions, public funded organizations, private sector institutions/agencies of repute, R&D laboratories/centers and non-governmental organizations working in the relevant field.

4. ELIGIBILITY

4.1. Authority will extend financial assistance for undertaking viable research proposals so as to obtain definite advancements in specific fields on well identified issues of food safety which will help the Authority for better understanding of the related food safety issues and to meet its policy aims and the objectives.

5. NATURE OF THE PROJECT:

Projects which could be taken up by the Authority would be of following types:-

- (a) Projects sponsored by the Authority which are directly concerned with its mandate and the achievement of its objectives (may include pilot projects on new concepts).

The Authority will identify specific areas where further studies and research are required and will carry out an internal evaluation of suitable institutions which can carry out the research. External experts will also be associated in this evaluation wherever necessary. The Authority will then contact the shortlisted institutions for carrying out the research with the available expertise with them.

- (b) **Competitive selection of projects from various agencies.**

The Authority will indicate the broad areas for soliciting projects from various agencies. Proposals received from those agencies will be evaluated competitively and would be considered for support provided they fulfil the requirements laid down in this regard.

- (c) **The outcome of the project:**

The project should be defined in precise terms and should be in furtherance of mandate of FSSAI. The outcome should be such that can be translated into a follow-up action on plan or should lead to in-depth understanding of issues of larger public interest requiring intervention of Public Authorities.

6. FUNDING PATTERN

- 6.1 Financial assistance for the purchase of essential equipments, equipment accessories, consumables, TA for research purpose, expenditure related to JRF/SRF/RA and the auxiliary staff specific to the project for a maximum of two years, related books, journal/periodicals and reference materials and 5% of the project cost as overhead expenditure. No assistance will be provided for already existing equipments, furniture, construction, computer, stationery and foreign travel. The components of the proposal for funding will be considered solely on the discretion of Authority and no representation in this regard shall be entertained.

7. HOW TO APPLY

- 7.1 The Principal Investigator (P.I.) is required to submit research proposal along

with a soft version in prescribed standard proforma (**ANNEXURE-A**), addressed to The Chief Executive Officer, FSSAI, FDA Bhawan, Kotla Road, New Delhi-110 002. Application / research proposals on well identified topics can be submitted whenever invited so by the Authority.

- 7.2 The complete application should be forwarded through the Head of the concerned Institution duly certifying that the required facilities (viz: land, buildings, laboratory, manpower and other infrastructure etc) are available and will be provided to the investigator(s) to work on the proposed project
- 7.3 Depending on the magnitude and nature of research involved, the research project may have more than one investigator and in such cases, the first investigator shall be known as "Principal Investigator" (PI). In the event of a collaborative project involving two or more institutions, the consent of each of such institution should also be furnished with the proposal. However, funds will be released only to the executing Institution / University, organization where PI is working.
- 7.4 Research proposals should be prepared after extensive consultations and review of available literature and references.

8. PROCESSING OF THE PROPOSAL IN THE AUTHORITY

The research proposals along with a soft version on receipt in the Authority will be examined by the Division and will be placed before **Technical Appraisal & Evaluation Committee (TAEC)** constituted in the Authority for the purpose. If TAEC requires additional information other than Standard conditions, the same can be sought from the concerned research organization. After TAEC recommendation for the proposal, submission of the compliance to standard conditions and requisite information by the applicant organization, the proposal will be placed before Project Approval Committee for obtaining necessary administrative approval and financial concurrence.

The Constitution of the TAEC and PAC will be with the approval of Chairperson, FSSAI. The members of the TAEC include subject matter experts and representatives of different concerned Government departments, Industries, Academic / research organizations. TAEC will be chaired by the Director of the Division of the Authority. TAEC will comprise minimum 5 (Five) members with the quorum of 4(Four) and more depending upon nature and scope of the project(s).

The members of the PAC include members from Finance, Administration, Division Concerned (Technical) and member from TAEC. The Director of R&D Division will be member secretary of the Committee. PAC will be chaired by the Chief Executive

Officer, FSSAI. PAC will comprise minimum 5 (Five) members excluding the member secretary. PAC will meet every month accordingly as per the projects to be approved.

The progress of all ongoing projects will be monitored by **Project Monitoring Committee (PMC)**, which will be meeting from time to time (as required) during the currency of the project to suggest corrective measures and steer the project team towards meeting set objectives. Final evaluation of the project will be done by TAEC.

PMC include members from the Division Concerned (Technical), TAEC and R&D Division of the Authority. PMC will be chaired by the Director of the Division Concerned (Technical).

9. **PROCEDURE FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS**

9.1 After fulfillment of all the required criteria by TAEC, the proposal will be placed before PAC Chaired by CEO, FSSAI for necessary administrative and financial approval of the project. After fulfillment of the PAC condition(s), in-principle approval of the project will be conveyed to the concerned applicant research organization. After signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Authority and the applicant organization, the project will be considered and approved for release of first installment which will not exceed 30% of total assistance approved. However, to meet the expenditure on the purchase of essential equipment / spares, the Competent Authority may enhance this limit to 50% in case of adequate justification. Further relaxation in release of assistance may be approved by the Competent Authority in highly deserving cases on case to case basis. Wherever purchase of equipments and other accessories are essential, assistance will be released subject to submission the quotation for the equipments and the accessories to be procured. After approval of the project the applicant organization shall submit a surety bond on non-judicial stamp paper of Rs. 100/- in the prescribed format. The organization shall submit the copies of the purchase order to the Authority not later than 4 months of release of the installments/assistance.

9.2 After utilization of the assistance already released and before requesting for release of the next, the applicant University/Institute/organisation must submit the Utilization Certificate (UC) as per Form GFR19-A alongwith the statement of expenditure, having detailed breakup (issued by the Competent Authority/C.A) clearly bringing out the expenditure incurred by the applicant University/Institute/organization / agency.

9.3 The research organization shall submit a progress report in the prescribed format to the Authority from time to time. After commencement of the project, the applicant organization may be required to make presentation before PMC,

as and when required. The progress will be assessed by PMC and subject to recommendation of the PMC, the project will be considered for release of subsequent installment.

- 9.4 The Authority will release final installment of 10% of the approved grant only after ensuring the completion of the project, submission of utilization certificate (UC) for earlier release, Project Completion Report (PCR), and acceptance of the project outcome by TEAC and the Authority.
- 9.5 The findings of the project will be presented before the appraising team as and when required.
- 9.7 Results of projects will be disseminated by the Authority and the rights thereof will vest in the Authority.
- 9.8 The Authority will make efforts to communicate the findings of these research projects for technical and lay audiences. Final reports will be placed in public domain so that findings of research projects are accessible to the general public. The Authority will also work for creation of an electronic network/database of scientists/experts desirous to work in the areas of food safety.
- 9.9 The financial support by Authority is intended to be procured supplement research facilities available with the sponsoring institutions. It is not intended to support establishment of specialised facilities, centres or divisions. These projects are intended to supplement ongoing R&D efforts in those institutions where basic infrastructure exists.
- 9.10 Any unspent balance from the previous instalment lying with the institute would be adjusted before claiming subsequent instalment. Institutions receiving assistance will have to maintain separate accounts for each research project and will also be responsible for the safe custody of the equipment(s) purchased out of the assistance. Items/equipment should be purchased through competitive bidding/tendering process.
- 9.11 The work on the sanctioned research project must commence at the earliest maximum within 3 months from the date of release of funds, failing which the project shall be cancelled and the funds shall be refunded immediately with a penal interest as per the existing Government rules.

10. PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT (PCR)

- 10.1 The applicant University/Institute/organization must submit the Project Completion Report (**PCR**) in prescribed format along with the UC of the fund

released as per Form GFR19-A and the statement of expenditure (issued by the Competent Authority-in case of Govt. organization / C.A.in case of private organization) clearly bringing out the expenditure with detailed breakup incurred by the applicant University / Institute / organisation/ agency.

- 10.2 The Project Completion report (**PCR**) may be submitted as per the prescribed format, bringing out the methodology adopted, the details of final outcome with its application related to the food safety issues. The details of scientists/scholars trained expertise developed their qualification alongwith the permanent address shall also be mentioned in the PCR.
- 10.3 The Principal Investigator (P.I.) is required to submit PCR within three months on completion of the project. The report must be in detail and should provide information about (a) the original objective(s) of the project, (b) how far these objectives have been achieved. The actual research findings/outcome of the project summarized in about 200 words shall be brought out in the PCR to facilitate its publication by the Authority and to make it available on its website for public.
- 10.4 The copy of manuscript(s), preprint and reprints of the research emanating from the work should be attached to the PCR. Failure to submit the PCR will disqualify the investigator from seeking further assistance from Authority. Their names will be placed on the website and the same will be circulated to all the concerned agencies for blacklisting.

11. TENURE, PROGRESS REPORT

- 11.1 The tenure of a project would be normally not exceeding one year unless it is specified. TAEC will evaluate the progress of project to ensure that the funds are properly utilized as per the approved project. For this purpose Principal Investigators (PIs) shall submit a comprehensive progress report as per the standard format to the Authority from time to time. In case of deserving cases depending upon the satisfactory progress and the recommendation of the TAEC the project tenure may be extended to maximum three years on a case-to-case basis.

12. INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

The Authority will establish a **Research Advisory Committee (RAC)** to oversee research strategy to advice, direct and co-ordinate the research and surveillance efforts. The research portfolio may be got reviewed through a third party every 5 years.

