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भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान अनुसंधान परिषद
स्वास्थ्य अनुसंधान विभाग, स्वास्थ्य और परिवार
कल्याण मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार

Indian Council of Medical Research
Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health
and Family Welfare, Government of India

No.: BMI/ePMS/121273

Date: 01/03/2023

CALL FOR INVESTIGATOR-INITIATED RESEARCH PROPOSALS* FOR SMALL EXTRAMURAL GRANTS

Overview and purpose

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) provides financial assistance for Indian scientists working outside ICMR institutes to conduct research in the fields of medicine, public health, and allied disciplines aimed at improving health of Indians under its Extramural Research Programme.

The proposed research in response to Call for Proposals should be well circumscribed, and time bound. It should achieve specific and measurable objectives and should be in line with ICMR priorities. Multidisciplinary projects which aim to find solutions to priority disease and conditions (see table 1) will receive preference for funding. Research proposals that take forward leads from previous ICMR grants to fruition will also be given preference.

The following types of research proposals will be considered. Some indicative examples of each category are given below.

Discovery research aimed at finding novel interventions (basic research). Some examples are pre-clinical and phase-I studies including phytopharmaceuticals and traditional medicines and genomic methods/algorithms/tools for personalized medicine etc.

Development research aimed at developing interventions for screening, diagnosis, prevention, treatment of diseases/conditions or make existing interventions simpler, safer, more efficacious, or more affordable. Examples of such research includes development of Point of care tests, molecular diagnostic tests, animal models for diseases appropriate dosage and formulations, artificial intelligence and machine learning predictive tools/models, phase 2/3 (or equivalent phase) clinical trials of vaccine and therapeutics etc.

Delivery research or implementation research aimed at learning how to overcome barriers in delivering effective interventions to the people who need them. This will include health system-based interventions to increase access, and to successfully implement national health programme or schemes, reducing inequity and improve quality of health care.

Descriptive Research aimed to understand the disease or condition including its burden, risk factors and determinants and pathogenesis mechanism will **not** be prioritized; will be funded **only** if deemed by ICMR to be critical to move towards finding solutions.

* Erstwhile called "Ad-Hoc" projects. The change is only in the name, the scheme structure and conditions remain the same.

Priority diseases or conditions

Research proposals that are aimed at finding solutions for prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment or rehabilitation of the following diseases or conditions will receive preference for funding:

Table-1: Priority Diseases and conditions

Communicable Diseases	Non-Communicable Diseases	Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition
One-health	Cancer – breast, cervix, oral, lung	Preconception care
Tuberculosis	Diabetes	Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy
Antimicrobial resistance	Cardio-vascular disease	Gestational diabetes
Malaria	COPD	Intrapartum care
HIV, Sexually Transmitted Infections	Stroke	Postnatal care
Influenza and other Respiratory infections	Epilepsy	Stillbirths
Gastrointestinal infections	Dementia / Alzheimer's disease	Polycystic Ovary Syndrome
Viral Hepatitis	Rheumatic Heart Disease	Endometriosis
Sepsis	Trauma and Burns	Neonatal sepsis
Meningitis/encephalitis	Chronic GE/Liver disease	Perinatal asphyxia
Urinary infections	Chronic Kidney Disease	Preterm birth / low birth weight
Lymphatic Filariasis	Depression, anxiety	Early child development
Kala-azar/Leishmaniasis	Psychosis	Childhood pneumonia, diarrhea, fever
Dengue	Substance Use Disorders	Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding
Helminth Infestation	Oral health	Childhood malnutrition
Measles, Rubella	NCD risk factors – diet, activity, alcohol, tobacco	Anaemia in women and children
Rickettsia infections (including scrub typhus and non-scrub typhus rickettsia)	Sickle Cell Disease / Thalassemia	Adolescent nutrition
COVID-19	Clotting disorders	Nutrition in acute/chronic disease

Duration of project and funding:

Current budgetary ceiling is 1.5 crores per project.

The project duration will be up to a maximum period of three years. An additional period of up to 6 months for preparatory activities (with no additional costs) can be incorporated in the project proposal.

How to apply

A proposal can be submitted for financial support through ONLINE MODE ONLY by Indian scientists/ professionals who have a regular employment in Medical Institutes/ Research Institutes/ Universities/ Colleges/ recognized Research & Development laboratories/ Government and semi-government organizations and NGOs (documentary evidence of their recognition including DSIR certificate should be enclosed with every proposal). **ICMR scientists are not eligible to apply in this call.** ICMR scientists may be named as co-investigators in these projects, but no funds will be given for ICMR institutions or scientists in these cases.

Format for project proposal is provided in Annexure-I (Part A & B)

Proposal Review Process

Two independent experts will review and score each project proposal. The scoring criteria are as follows:

- | | |
|---|----|
| 1. Rationale of the project – is it likely to solve a priority problem? | 20 |
| 2. Possible impact – is it likely to have impact on health outcomes? | 20 |
| 3. Novelty/innovation – is the study developing or testing a new idea? | 20 |
| 4. Methodology – are study methods appropriate to achieve the objectives? | 20 |
| 5. Implementation strategy – is the study feasible in a timely manner? | 20 |

Projects that receive a score of at least 60 will be shortlisted for review by a Project Review Committee with 7 members. Multiple committees will be formed based on the topic of the proposals. The committee will rank the shortlisted proposals and provide comments that could improve the proposals. Proposal-improvement workshops may be arranged for benefit of the applicants.

Budget review will be done by a committee of experienced researchers to increase or reduce budget as needed. Top ranked proposals in each priority area will be funded.

Timeline

Activities	Date
Release of Call	01-March-2023
Last date for submission of proposal	28-April-2023
Review and selection	30-June-2023
Proposal improvement & final submission of documents	31-July-2023
Approval and release of funds	31-October-2023

Important note for the submission of proposal:

1. Before proceeding to submit the proposal, it is suggested to read user manual and ICMR Extramural Research Program guidelines; and make ready all relevant information, documents and research plan (<https://epms.icmr.org.in/adhoc>).
2. Open the ICMR Electronics Project Management System (e-PMS) portal <https://epms.icmr.org.in>. The user manual of e-PMS (under Guidelines → e-PMS manual) is available at the portal.
3. Project proposal submission is three steps process in e-PMS:
 - Step 1: PI registration/ Login (<https://epms.icmr.org.in/userLogin>)
 - Step 2: Verify email ID and complete/ update PI profile
 - Step 3: Proposal submission
4. After completing mandatory section of PI profile, click on “Proposal submission →Click on Submit new proposal → Select the program from drop-down box as "Investigator-initiated Research Proposals” →Fill the form step by step.
5. There is no separate budget head for consumable. Expense for consumable can be submitted under contingency budget head only along with item wise proper justification. It is advised to carefully read the budget provision available at Guideline for Extramural Research Programme of ICMR.
6. Overhead charge will not be more than 3% of staff and contingency for all type of institutes as per ICMR order F. No. Sr.ACO/Misc.4(86226) dated 22/09/2020. Overhead expenditure will not be granted on equipments and travel allowances.
7. Including of at least one Co-PI from PI’s institute is mandatory.
8. PIs are advised to submit proposal well ahead of the last date, since servers may be overloaded and slow to respond.
9. **For any queries related to the call, please contact**

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ANNEXURE I: Format for submission of Project Proposal

PART-A

(No identifiable information should be included in part-A, Sl 1 to 15)

- Title of the proposed research project (up to 25 words):** should be **specific, concise** and yet sufficiently descriptive and informative.
- Summary (up to 250 words):** A structured summary should contain the following subheadings: Rationale/ gaps in existing knowledge, Novelty, Objectives, Methods, and Expected outcome.
- Does it cover a priority area? If yes please select the most appropriate one from the list below:

Communicable Diseases	Non-Communicable Diseases	Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> One-health	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancer – breast, cervix, oral, lung	<input type="checkbox"/> Preconception care
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuberculosis	<input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/> Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Antimicrobial resistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Cardio-vascular disease	<input type="checkbox"/> Gestation diabetes
<input type="checkbox"/> Malaria	<input type="checkbox"/> COPD	<input type="checkbox"/> Intrapartum care
<input type="checkbox"/> HIV, Sexually Transmitted Infections	<input type="checkbox"/> Stroke	<input type="checkbox"/> Postnatal care
<input type="checkbox"/> Influenza and other Respiratory infections	<input type="checkbox"/> Epilepsy	<input type="checkbox"/> Stillbirths
<input type="checkbox"/> Gastrointestinal infections	<input type="checkbox"/> Dementia / Alzheimer's disease	<input type="checkbox"/> Polycystic Ovary Syndrome
<input type="checkbox"/> Viral Hepatitis	<input type="checkbox"/> Rheumatic Heart Disease	<input type="checkbox"/> Endometriosis
<input type="checkbox"/> Sepsis	<input type="checkbox"/> Trauma and Burns	<input type="checkbox"/> Neonatal sepsis
<input type="checkbox"/> Meningitis/encephalitis	<input type="checkbox"/> Chronic GE/Liver disease	<input type="checkbox"/> Perinatal asphyxia
<input type="checkbox"/> Urinary infections	<input type="checkbox"/> Chronic Kidney Disease	<input type="checkbox"/> Preterm birth / low birth weight
<input type="checkbox"/> Lymphatic Filariasis	<input type="checkbox"/> Depression, anxiety	<input type="checkbox"/> Early child development
<input type="checkbox"/> Kala-azar/Leishmaniasis	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychosis	<input type="checkbox"/> Childhood pneumonia, diarrhea, fever
<input type="checkbox"/> Dengue	<input type="checkbox"/> Substance Use Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding
<input type="checkbox"/> Helminth Infestation	<input type="checkbox"/> Oral health	<input type="checkbox"/> Childhood malnutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> Measles, Rubella	<input type="checkbox"/> NCD risk factors – diet, activity, alcohol, tobacco	<input type="checkbox"/> Anaemia in women and children
<input type="checkbox"/> Rickettsia infections (including scrub typhus and non-scrub typhus rickettsia)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sickle Cell Disease / Thalassemia	<input type="checkbox"/> Adolescent nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> COVID-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Clotting disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition in acute/chronic disease

4. Area of research (Please tick one):

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Description | <input type="checkbox"/> Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discovery | <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery |

5. **Keywords:** Six keywords separated by comma which best describe your project may be provided.
6. **Abbreviations:** Only standard abbreviations should be used in the text. List of abbreviations maximum of ten may be given as a list.
7. **Problem Statement (up to 500 words):** State the currently available information to present the problem adequately.
8. **Rationale of the study (up to 250 words):** Mention how the research question addresses the critical barrier(s) in scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or programmatic/clinical/lab practice and its relevance to local, national and international context with relevant bibliography.
9. **Hypothesis/ Research question (up to 100 words):** Please provide details
10. **Study Objectives (up to 25 words/ objective):** Define the objectives clearly and in measurable terms; mention as primary and secondary objectives, if necessary. Do not include more than 3-4 objectives.
11. **Methodology:** Include objective-wise work plan under the following sub-headings:
 - a. Study design
 - b. Study site
 - c. Methods (e.g. PICO)
 - d. Sample size
 - e. Implementation strategy
 - f. Statistical analysis
 - g. Ethical issues
12. **Expected outcome/ Deliverables aligned with research question (up to 100 words):**
13. **Future plan based on expected outcomes (up to 100 words):**
14. **Whether the study is going to generate new intellectual property** Please provide details
15. **Timelines with achievable targets:** GANTT/ PERT chart to be included.

PART-B

- 16. Preliminary work done by the PI including the source of funding (up to 250 words):**
Proof of concept (if any)

- 17. Skill and experience of the research team:** Highlight only salient points (along with 5 relevant publications) that provides confidence to reviewers that team can implement the project with quality.

- 18. Institutional Support/ Facilities:** Mention the efforts made to achieve inter-departmental or interinstitutional collaboration needed for study implementation, details of coordination between clinical, laboratory and data management procedures, mention:

- 19. Laboratory facilities (*in-vitro/ in-silico*):** institutional resources such as instruments/ equipment and other physical resources available for use in the project proposed animal house etc.

- 20. Budget:** Budget should be as per ICMR guidelines available on the website. Justifications for all sub-headings under budget (as per ICMR format) is to be provided in detail.

- 21. Conflict of Interest Declaration (if any):** PI will be asked to submit declaration, if shortlisted.

- 22.** Additional supplementary information including figures, tables, flow diagrams, etc. can be shared as PDF (20-30 KB).