

Guidelines for INSPIRE Faculty Scheme

The Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, has launched the “**Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE)**” [<http://www.inspire-dst.gov.in>] program in 2008. This Scheme has been designed to provide contractual research positions to young achievers for independent research and emerge as a leader in future science & technology.

a) Purpose

- To provide attractive opportunities to young achievers for developing independent scientific profiles and launch them in fulfilling long term careers.
- Expected to augment high quality scientific manpower for scientific and educational institutions, specially the Central and State universities.
- While the vertical migration among students in different INSPIRE components would be encouraged, the Scheme would also provide opportunity to students for lateral entry into this component.
- This component would provide a career opportunity and not a guarantee for tenure positions after 5 years.

b) Eligibility

Essential

- Indian citizens and people of Indian origin including NRI/PIO status with PhD (in science, mathematics, engineering, pharmacy, medicine, and agriculture related subjects) from any recognized university in the world.
- Those who have submitted their PhD Theses and are awaiting award of the degree are also eligible.
- The upper age limit at the time of awarding the offer should be 32 years for considering support for a period of 5 years.
- Candidates who are employed (in any form i.e. permanent, contractual) with any organization within India will be eligible to apply. However, they will be considered only for the Research Grant component of the INSPIRE Faculty Award scheme.

Desirable

- Candidate who are within top 1% at the School Leaving Examination, IIT-JEE rank, 1st Rank Holder either in graduation or post-graduation level university examination (which are used presently for identifying INSPIRE Scholars at under-graduate level and INSPIRE Fellows for doctoral degree).
- Publications with aggregate Impact Factor 10 or at least three (one in case of Mathematics) research publications in SCI journals of high Impact Factor.

c) Applications

- A new Format for direct Application and Nomination shall be designed by DST in consultation with the Members of the Academy Panel.
- Both methods viz, Nominations from academic institutions or industry R&D through their Vice-Chancellors/ Directors of Institution/ Head of Institutions/ Presidents and Fellows of Science Academies from India and Abroad/ Eminent Scientists based on personal knowledge and Direct Application from the Candidate shall be available.

d) Method of Selection

- INSA would be requested to coordinate the implementation of INSPIRE Faculty Scheme,
- An Apex Level Committee would be constituted for necessary appraisal and making specific recommendations on selection of candidates.
- Institutions enjoying the status of Centre of Excellence like IITs, IISc, TIFR, CSIR Laboratories etc. and Central & State Universities selected under PURSE scheme of DST could employ their own internal processes and short-list candidates for induction under INSPIRE Faculty Scheme.
- INSA in consultation with DST would prepare a panel of Chairmen and Expert Members for various disciplines for Institutions to constitute appropriate Appraisal and Screening Committees,
- Discipline based committees for evaluating and screening the candidates who apply directly or are nominated without support from Host-Institutions.
- INSA in consultation with DST will constitute an Apex Committee to consider the selection of various short-listed candidates.
- The applicant needs to find an appropriate host institution anywhere in India for pursuing the INSPIRE Faculty assignment and may be in contact with a senior faculty/scientist in the host institution to prepare the application in consultation with him/her, if necessary.

e) Number of INSPIRE Faculty position

- Maximum number of INSPIRE Faculty positions under INSPIRE Faculty Scheme shall be 1000 per year.

f) Amount & Duration of each Fellowship

- Each selected INSPIRE Faculty shall be eligible to receive a consolidated amount equivalent to the scale of the Assistant Professor of an IIT as Fellowship amount. In addition, a Research Grant of Rs 7 lakh per year for 5 years shall also be provided to each successful candidate.
- The INSPIRE Faculty position is for a maximum period of 5 (five) year. However, one can not avail two fellowships concurrently during the tenure of this Award.
- In case the INSPIRE Faculty finds a permanent position during the tenure of the position, the Fellowship amount shall be discontinued from the day the INSPIRE Faculty joins in permanent position but he/she may continue with the INSPIRE Faculty Scheme availing Research Grant portion for the balance period to carry out research at the new position.

- The INSPIRE Faculty is eligible for applying for any competitive grants from all funding agencies during the tenure of the INSPIRE Faculty position and would be favorably considered by DST for future support at the end of 5 years based on performance and technical merit.
- Provision is available for supporting a research staff out of Research Grant support during the Award tenure of 5 years. In the event of getting employment elsewhere other than the present Host Institute, the Awardee could also be allowed to move the research student along with him/her to new place within the country.
- The Research Grant of Rs 35 lakh for 5 years @ Rs 7 lakh per year shall be trifurcated into three broad budget heads with the following Breaks up:
 - Recurring (including Project Manpower, Travel, Consumables & Contingencies - 60%
 - Capital Equipment - 35%
 - Overhead - 5%However, Travel and Contingencies would be limited to 10% each.

Each Awardee needs to provide proposal with detailed break up as above for utilization of Research Grant to DST-INSPIRE. Awardee/ Host Institution needs to adhere the approved break up for entire period of 5 years.

g) Roles and requirements of host institutions

- Host institutions should be encouraged to provide a congenial atmosphere for the awardees to excel in their work, and should view them as potential assets for faculty development.
- INSPIRE Faculty position shall not be available for renewal after completion of 5 years duration. Host-institutions are expected to consider “INSPIRE Faculty” for permanent positions in due course, subject to meeting institutions’ performance assessment criteria.
- In-breeding by host-institution is generally not encouraged. However, in case host-institutions are willing to nominate their own PhD students under this Scheme, specific justifications and commitment for development of independent directions of research should be clearly delineated.
- Minimum information/ commitment requirements from Host Institutions are:
 - Access to all common infrastructural facilities, acceptable laboratory and office space (independently or on shared basis), computing, library access, etc.,
 - Information on whether desirable new areas/directions of research are being introduced through this scheme,
 - Information on whether the INSPIRE Faculty will be allowed to supervise PhD students, hire research fellows, independently or jointly with a permanent faculty member,
 - Host-institution’s willingness to consider the candidate for a permanent position in due course, subject to meeting statutory requirements.
