



# Guidelines

## National Fellowships



**Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)  
Ministry of Education (MoE)**

JNU Institutional Area, Aruna Asaf Ali Marg, New Delhi - 110067 (INDIA)

## 1. Introduction

**1.1** National Fellowships are awarded to eminent Indian Social Scientists in recognition of their scholarly contributions. This scheme provides opportunity to these eminent social scientists to engage themselves in full-time research having the potential to contribute in advancement of knowledge in social sciences in a major way.

**1.2** The priority of the ICSSR is to address changing societal dynamics and social challenges through effective social science research while providing policy recommendations to the government based on research findings, along with clear monitoring and operational plans to mitigate policy failure risks. In the changing international dynamics and keeping in view India's aspirations to become a global economic and social power, it is essential to identify the specific areas of social sciences that are extremely vital for the country. Therefore, National Fellowships will be awarded only in the thrust areas identified by the ICSSR, which will be updated from time to time. The following thrust areas within the domain of social sciences have been currently identified by the ICSSR for the award of National Fellowships:

Sr. no	Broad Domains	Priority Areas
1.	Economics    Prosperity    /    Development Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Innovations in Agriculture and Rural Development</li> <li>b) Entrepreneurship and Start-ups</li> <li>c) Blue Economy</li> <li>d) Natural Resources and Regional Development</li> <li>e) Sustainable Development</li> <li>f) Green Economy Transition</li> <li>g) Fintech and Fintech-based Solutions for Economic Development</li> <li>h) Cooperatives and Rural Transformation</li> <li>i) Emerging Technologies and Socio-economic Development</li> <li>j) MSMEs and Development</li> <li>k) GST Reforms</li> <li>l) Circular Economy</li> <li>m) Informal Economy</li> <li>n) Gig Economy and Market Dynamics</li> </ul>
2.	Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Financial Management</li> <li>b) Human Resource Management</li> <li>c) CSR Programs and Business Ethics</li> <li>d) Technology and Management</li> <li>e) Organisational Behaviour</li> <li>f) Sustainability and Management</li> <li>g) Human Capital, Innovation and Management</li> <li>h) Corporate Governance and Inclusive Development</li> </ul>

3.	Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Trade and Commerce</li> <li>b) Fintech and Fintech-based Solutions</li> <li>c) Financial Literacy and Digital Financial Systems</li> <li>d) Digital Assets and Governance</li> <li>e) Financial Inclusion</li> <li>f) E-Commerce</li> <li>g) Taxation, Reforms and Ease of Doing Business</li> </ul>
4.	Sociology/ Social Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Development and Empowerment of Vulnerable Sections of Society</li> <li>b) Food and Society</li> <li>c) Urbanization in India</li> <li>d) Informal Work and Domestic Labour</li> <li>e) Ageing and Social Security</li> <li>f) Education, Technology and Society</li> </ul>
5.	Social Anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Linguistic Anthropology</li> <li>b) Cultural Anthropology</li> <li>c) Ethnographic Studies</li> <li>d) Development and Anthropology</li> <li>e) Religion, Rituals and Social Cohesion</li> <li>f) Anthropology of Infrastructure and Urban Change</li> <li>g) Family and Changing Social Institutions</li> <li>h) Prehistoric Cultures of the Indian Subcontinent</li> <li>i) Cultural Survival and Rights</li> <li>j) Global and Local</li> <li>k) Bio-cultural Studies of Health and Disease</li> </ul>

6.	Culture Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Digital Humanities</li> <li>b) Life, Literature and Thought in India</li> <li>c) Literature and Globalization</li> <li>d) Art Practices and Folk/Oral Forms</li> <li>e) Medical Humanities</li> <li>f) Language, Literature and Popular Culture</li> <li>g) Intergenerational Behaviour</li> <li>h) Media, Digital Communication and Language Shifts</li> <li>i) Intellectual Traditions and Social Thought in India</li> <li>j) Cultural Heritage and Traditions</li> </ul>
7.	Sanskrit Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Grammatical Traditions</li> <li>b) Manuscript Studies</li> <li>c) Poetics</li> <li>d) Literary and Aesthetic Traditions</li> <li>e) Sanskrit and Indian Knowledge Systems</li> <li>f) Sanskrit and Contemporary Discourse</li> <li>g) Cross-Cultural Aesthetic Dialogues and Linguistic Interface</li> <li>h) Dharmashastras, Commentarial Traditions and Civilisational Discourses</li> <li>i) Computational Sanskrit and Digital Archiving</li> </ul>
8.	Socio-Philosophical Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Indian Philosophical Systems</li> <li>b) Comparative Ethics</li> <li>c) Artificial Intelligence and Ethics</li> <li>d) Philosophies of Mind and Consciousness</li> <li>e) Decolonizing Philosophy Studies in India</li> <li>f) Philosophy of Ecology and Sustainability</li> <li>g) Intercultural Ideas, Comparative Philosophy and Modernity</li> </ul>
9.	Sociolinguistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Language, Culture and Society</li> <li>b) Social Concepts and Theories in Indian Languages</li> <li>c) Multilingualism</li> <li>d) Sociolinguistics and Education</li> <li>e) Language, Media and Technology</li> </ul>

10.	Gender Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Women-Led Development</li> <li>b) Gender and Society</li> <li>c) Gender and Work: Women in the Informal and Unorganized Sectors</li> <li>d) Gender and Environment</li> <li>e) Women and Digital Transformation: Bridging the Gender Gap in Technology</li> <li>f) Gender, Education and Health</li> <li>g) Gender and Law</li> </ul>
11.	Health Studies/ Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) AYUSH &amp; Community Medicine</li> <li>b) Indigenous Healing Methods and Practices</li> <li>c) Food and Nutrition of Children</li> <li>d) 'Zero-Food' Children: Socio-economic and Environmental Aspects</li> <li>e) Sports and Fitness</li> <li>f) Digital Health Services</li> <li>g) Public Healthcare in Rural and Urban Regions</li> <li>h) AI and Public Health</li> <li>i) Ethno-medicines and Integrative Systems</li> <li>j) Mental Health in Post-Pandemic Societies</li> </ul>
12.	Political Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) E-Governance</li> <li>b) Human Rights and Legislation</li> <li>c) Contemporary Electoral System</li> <li>d) Participatory Politics</li> <li>e) Politics and Technology</li> <li>f) Indian Political Thought</li> <li>g) Indigenous Polity</li> <li>h) Rural and Urban Governance</li> <li>i) Indian Constitutionalism</li> <li>j) Climate Politics and Global Governance</li> <li>k) Democracy and Electoral Politics</li> <li>l) Public Policy and Welfare</li> <li>m) Social Media, Digital Interface and Democracy</li> <li>n) Women and Politics</li> </ul>

13.	International Relations/ Geopolitics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Geo-Politics</li> <li>b) Indo-Pacific Strategic Relations</li> <li>c) India's Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power</li> <li>d) Global South and Diplomacy</li> <li>e) Multilateralism, Plurilateralism and Global Institutions</li> <li>f) Energy Security and Geopolitical Transformations</li> </ul>
14.	Public Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ethical Governance</li> <li>b) Governance Reforms and Bureaucracy</li> <li>c) Public Service Delivery</li> <li>d) Digital Governance</li> <li>e) Decentralization and Local Administration</li> <li>f) Public Policy and Governance</li> <li>g) Conflicts, Crisis and Public Administration</li> </ul>
15.	Diaspora Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Role of Indian Diaspora in the Development of Bharat</li> <li>b) Multiculturalism and Migration</li> <li>c) Foreign Policy and Diaspora</li> <li>d) Diaspora and Economic Development</li> <li>e) Diaspora and Identity</li> <li>f) Literature, History and Diaspora</li> </ul>
16.	National Security and Strategic Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Defence and National Security</li> <li>b) Defence Manufacturing</li> <li>c) Border Security and Illegal Cross-border Migration</li> <li>d) Information Warfare and Cyber Security</li> <li>e) Maritime Security</li> <li>f) Non-traditional Security Threats</li> <li>g) Emerging Threats and Hybrid Warfare</li> <li>h) Terrorism and Global Security</li> <li>i) Internal Security</li> </ul>

17.	Education and Skilling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Digital Learning &amp; Technology Integration</li> <li>b) National Education Policy 2020: Implementation and Challenges</li> <li>c) Ethics, Values and Innovation in Education</li> <li>d) Artificial Intelligence and Education</li> <li>e) Skilling Youth for Future Jobs</li> <li>f) Skill Education in HEIs</li> <li>g) Internationalisation and Education</li> <li>h) Academic Governance and Leadership</li> <li>i) Innovation and School Education</li> <li>j) Digital Skilling and Employment</li> <li>k) Early Education and Pedagogy</li> <li>l) Reforms in Higher Education</li> <li>m) Teacher Education and Capacity Building</li> </ul>
18.	Social Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Mental Health &amp; Culturally Responsive Interventions</li> <li>b) Social Dimensions of Indian Psychology</li> <li>c) Digital Life, Technology, and Psychological Well-being</li> <li>d) Workplace Well-being</li> <li>e) Community and Inter-group Relations</li> <li>f) Social Influence and Behavioural Changes</li> </ul>
19.	Legal Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Legal and Para-legal Systems and Access to Justice</li> <li>b) Legal History of India</li> <li>c) Judicial Reforms and Court Management</li> <li>d) Law, Technology, and Innovation (Including AI and Digital Rights)</li> <li>e) Legal Pluralism and Customary Law in Contemporary Context</li> <li>f) Criminal Justice System and Reforms</li> <li>g) Decolonizing Legal Studies</li> </ul>

20.	Social and Human Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Population Studies and Demographic Transitions</li> <li>b) Migration, Displacement, and Spatial Mobility</li> <li>c) Human Capital, Livelihoods, and Holistic Development</li> <li>d) Regional Geography</li> <li>e) Transformations in Rural and Urban Landscapes</li> <li>f) Disaster Management and Spatial Vulnerability Assessment</li> <li>g) Technology, Risk Communication, and Inclusive Governance in Disaster Management in the Global South</li> <li>h) Urban Resilience, Smart Cities, and Sustainable Urban Futures</li> <li>i) Social, Cultural, and Infrastructural Dimensions of Disaster Resilience and Rehabilitation</li> </ul>
21.	Environmental Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Human-Environment Relationship</li> <li>b) Climate Change: Impacts, Mitigation, and Adaptation</li> <li>c) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Indian Context</li> <li>d) Renewable and Clean Energy Resources</li> <li>e) Conservation of Biodiversity, Wildlife, Soil, and Natural Resources</li> <li>f) Environmental Policy, Law, and Governance</li> <li>g) Climate Adaptation and Community-Based Preparedness and Resilience</li> <li>h) Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Indigenous Environmental Practices</li> </ul>
22.	Modern Social History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) History and Heritage</li> <li>b) Memory, Identity and History</li> <li>c) Maritime and Coastal Histories of India</li> <li>d) Decolonization, Nationalism, and Historiographical Shifts</li> <li>e) Digital History, Public History, and Archival Innovations</li> <li>f) Print Culture, History of Education and Knowledge Systems</li> <li>g) The Partition of India</li> </ul>
23.	Media Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Mass Media and its Socio-Cultural Impact</li> <li>b) Mass Media and Society in India</li> <li>c) OTT Platforms, Popular Culture, and Identity Construction</li> <li>d) Regional Language, Media and Journalism</li> </ul>

24.	Library Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) E-Resources and IT Application</li> <li>b) Meta-data Harvesting Techniques and Digital Repository</li> <li>c) Publication and its Social Dimensions</li> <li>d) E-Resources and IT Application</li> <li>e) Artificial Intelligence Applications in Library and Information Services</li> <li>f) Knowledge Curation and Open Access</li> </ul>
25.	Language Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Knowledge Traditions in Indian Languages</li> <li>b) Application of Knowledge Contained in the Vernacular Texts</li> <li>c) Technology and Language Interface</li> <li>d) Comparative Grammar and Linguistic Structure of Indian Languages</li> <li>e) Development of Multilingual Pedagogical Resources and Translation Tools</li> </ul>
26.	Indian Knowledge Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Indian Textual and Oral Traditions</li> <li>b) Indigenous Innovation, Technology and Development</li> <li>c) Development of Pedagogical Materials in Diverse Disciplinary/ Inter-disciplinary Areas based on Indian Intellectual Texts</li> <li>d) Bharatiya Approaches to Ecology and Sustainability</li> <li>e) Indian Concepts of Mind and Consciousness</li> <li>f) Indian Aesthetic and Performative Traditions</li> <li>g) Indian Knowledge Systems and Public Policy Interface</li> <li>h) Digital Humanities and Indian Knowledge Systems</li> <li>i) Indian Knowledge Systems and Law</li> <li>j) Art and Architecture in India</li> <li>k) Integration of Indian Knowledge Systems in Curriculum</li> </ul>
27.	Rural Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Rural Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods</li> <li>b) Dynamics of Rural Society and Social Transformation</li> <li>c) Rural-Urban Migration and Remittance Economy</li> <li>d) Cultural Landscapes and Identity Markers in Rural India</li> <li>e) Digital Transformation and E-Governance in Rural Bharat</li> <li>f) Climate Resilience and Rural Adaptation Strategies</li> <li>g) Health, Education, and Infrastructure in Rural Development</li> </ul>

28.	<i>Divyangjan Studies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Intersectional /Multidisciplinary Studies on <i>Divyangjan</i></li> <li>b) Policy Research for <i>Divyangjan</i></li> <li>c) Rehabilitation, Innovation &amp; Technology for <i>Divyangjan</i></li> <li>d) Financial Empowerment of <i>Divyangjan</i></li> <li>e) Digital Accessibility and the <i>Divyangjan</i></li> <li>f) Cultural Representation and Media Portrayal of <i>Divyangjan</i></li> <li>g) Inclusive Infrastructure for <i>Divyangjan</i></li> </ul>
29.	<i>Janjatiya Studies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Indigenous/Tribal Knowledge System</li> <li>b) Tribe, Culture and Society</li> <li>c) Tribal Languages and Preservation</li> <li>d) Digital Inclusion and Tribal Youth Aspirations</li> <li>e) Comparative Tribal Development Models</li> <li>f) Tribal Education and Curriculum Inclusion-NEP 2020</li> <li>g) Intra-tribal and Inter-community Dynamics</li> </ul>

Research Proposals that span across disciplinary boundaries also fall within the areas of the Council's interest. The research proposals which may not be reflected in the priority areas shall also be considered if, in the opinion of the Experts Committee, its focus is on an important issue covered under social sciences and adjudged as outstanding, and recommended by the Committee for award.

## 2 Eligibility

**2.1** Renowned Indian social scientists who have retired from their universities/ research institutes are eligible to be nominated as described in 4.1 below. Scholars will be awarded National Fellowship only once in their lifetime.

**2.2** The nominees should have outstanding academic work and a significant amount of high-quality research publications to their credit.

**2.3** A fellow must affiliate himself/herself to UGC recognized Universities / Deemed-to-be-Universities, Institutes of National Importance as defined by MoE / UGC, ICSSR Research Institutes and Colleges having approved Ph.D. programme. Funds are disbursed through the affiliating/administering institution.

### **3 Nomination Procedure**

**3.1** Nominations are invited by the ICSSR from regular Vice-Chancellors of public funded Central and State Universities, Directors of the ICSSR Research Institutes/Regional Centres, present and former Council Members and National Fellows of the ICSSR.

**3.2** Nominating individuals should not forward more than two nominations against a Call. All nominations are to be accompanied by a letter of recommendation by the nominee, curriculum vitae of the scholar along with abstracts of research proposal and 10 best publications.

**3.3** Direct applications for National Fellowships will not be considered.

### **4 Procedure for Award**

**4.1** Nominations are initially scrutinized and short listed by the ICSSR with the help of an Expert Committee.

**4.2** The short-listed scholars will then be requested to submit a detailed proposal for consideration by the Selection Committee constituted by the ICSSR.

**4.3** The Selection Committee comprising senior Professors considers the detailed proposals and makes recommendation for award by the ICSSR.

**4.4** If deemed necessary by the Selection Committee, the nominees may be called for interaction in physical/ online mode.

### **5 Duration and Value**

**5.1** The duration of fellowship shall be for two years and no extension will be considered.

**5.2** The value of fellowship will be in line with the directives of the Ministry of Education for the National Fellowship.

### **6 Joining & Release of Fellowship**

**6.1** The scholar has to join the fellowship within three months of the date of the award letter by submitting all required documents through the affiliating institution. This may be extended in exceptional circumstances by the ICSSR.

**6.2** The fellowship will be sanctioned initially for a period of one year, effective from the date of joining of the Fellowship by the scholar. The renewal of the Fellowship for the subsequent year shall be subject to the receipt of satisfactory Annual Progress Report and Statement of Account for the fellowship released for first year.

**6.3** The first-year fellowship and contingency will be released in two equal instalments. The first instalment will be released after receiving the Grant-in-aid-Bill (GIB) and the second after receiving a Six-Monthly Progress report along with the statement of expenditure.

**6.4** The second-year fellowship and contingency grant will be released in three instalments. The first instalment of six-month fellowship will be released on receipt of the Grant-in-Aid Bill (GIB). The second instalment of 03 months fellowship will be released on receipt of a satisfactory Progress Report of next six months in the prescribed format along with the Statement of Account. The final instalment of remaining fellowship along with contingency will be released after receiving the final report and its acceptance by the ICSSR and Statement of Accounts with Utilization Certificate in GFR-12A Form of the entire sanctioned amount of fellowship duly signed by the competent authority of the affiliating institution. However, in case of non-public funded institution, the final instalment of fellowship will be released on receipt of the Audited Statement of Accounts with Utilization Certificate in GFR-12A Form and verification of the documents by the ICSSR.

**6.5** The 7.5% overhead charges to the public funded affiliating institution will be released only after verification of the documents by the ICSSR.

**6.6** The accounts and utilization certificate will be signed by the Finance Officer/Registrar/Director in case the accounts of the Institution are audited by the CAG/AG. Otherwise, accounts and utilization certificate should to be signed both by the competent authority of the affiliating institution along with a Chartered Accountant.

## **7 Completion of Fellowship**

**7.1** If a fellow leaves the fellowship before its tenure, he/she has to give an undertaking to submit the final report without claiming the fellowship from the date of leaving. In such cases, the ICSSR may consider to pay contingency grant for that period.

The scholar is expected to submit the final report within three months after completion of the duration of the fellowship. However, extension for submission of final report may be granted on justified reasons without any additional financial commitment of the ICSSR.

In case the fellow submits the final report late directly after missing submission of periodic progress reports, the ICSSR will decide for accepting the final report and releasing the balance amount of fellowship including contingency.

**7.2** On completion of the fellowship tenure, the scholar should submit the following:

**(a)** A book-length final report along-with a Summary of the report (4000-5000 words) and two published research papers preferably in peer-reviewed research journals on the theme of the research undertaken.

**(b)** These documents are be submitted in hard copy (two copies of final report and two copies each of the Summary and research articles) and a soft copy.

**7.3** Every final report needs to be checked for plagiarism before submission. Fellows are required to get their final report checked from the affiliating institution for Similarity Index and attach a report of

the same at the time of submission. As a policy, ICSSR does not accept contents beyond 10 percent on Similarity Index.

## **8 Obligation of the Affiliating Institution**

**8.1** The affiliating institution is required to provide the requisite research infrastructure to the scholar and maintain proper accounts. For this, the Council shall pay to the institution, overhead charges of seven and a half percent (7.5%) of the total Fellowship (fellowship amount plus contingency).

**8.2** The affiliating institution is required to give an undertaking in the prescribed format contained in the Application Form to administer and manage the ICSSR grant.

**8.3** The affiliating institution shall maintain a dedicated bank account for ICSSR grant (Scheme Code-0877) that is duly registered at PFMS portal for release of the National Fellowship Grant.

**8.4** The affiliating institution will be under obligation to ensure submission of the final report and an Audited Statement of Accounts and Utilization Certificate, (in the prescribed Performa GFR 19-A) duly certified by the Competent authority of the institution.

**8.5** The affiliating institution shall make suitable arrangements for preservation of data such as filled in schedules, tabulation sheets, manuscripts, reports, etc. relating to the study.

**8.6** In case a scholar leaves /discontinues his fellowship/dies before completion of fellowship tenure, the affiliating institution shall immediately inform ICSSR, settle the accounts including the refund of any unspent balance within three months of submission.

**8.7** The ICSSR reserves the right to demand raw data, or such part of it as may be specified, to be transferred to the ICSSR.

**8.8** The overhead charges shall be paid only after the completion of the fellowship and on receipt of the final audited Statement of Accounts.

## **9 Other Conditions**

**9.1** During the tenure of fellowship, National Fellows are expected to deliver lectures on areas of their research in an institution/university identified by the ICSSR.

**9.2** The contingency grant may be utilized for research and office assistance, books, stationery, computer related costs, research assistance and the field work expenses connected with the research work.

**9.3** The scholar shall acknowledge ICSSR's support in all publications resulting from the research output of the fellowship.

**9.4** The ICSSR reserves all rights to publish the fellowship report funded by it, provided the work is recommended for publication by Expert/Experts. The scholars can get it published themselves only after seeking permission from ICSSR.

**9.5** All fellowships are subject to income tax deductions as per the Government of India rules at the level of the affiliating/ administering institution.

**9.6** Defaulters of any previous fellowship/project/grant of the ICSSR will not be eligible for consideration.

**9.7** The change of the affiliating institution will be considered only in exceptional circumstances to be decided by the ICSSR. Transfer of fellowship to another affiliating institution will be further subject to submission of the following documents:

- (a) Satisfactory progress report;
- (b) Acceptance from the new affiliating institution.;
- (c) Audited statement of account and utilization certificate along with unspent balance, if any

**9.8** A fellow is not entitled for the same fellowship more than once.

**9.9** While accepting any fellowship from the ICSSR, a fellow should not accept any other fellowship or research project or regular assignment from any other institution.

**9.10** During the tenure of fellowship, the fellow will be governed by the rules of the affiliating institution in all matters including drawals of TA/DA, holidays/leave and contingency grant, etc. However, the duration and amount of fellowship will not exceed twenty-four months.

**9.11** The selected fellows are expected to do full time research in India. They could, however, undertake data collection outside India in exceptional cases and if warranted by the needs of the proposal. For this they are required to apply separately for consideration under the Data Collection Scheme of the ICSSR International Collaboration Division.

**9.12** The scholar should not have been subjected to any disciplinary/legal action/proceedings/financial penalties in his/her career/ research career.

**9.13** Books/periodicals/equipment purchased by the scholar out of the contingency grant should be deposited with the affiliating institution.

**9.14** Nominations, submitted against a Call will not be considered to the subsequent Calls on their own. Fresh nomination will have to be filed against a new Call.

**9.15** The Council reserves the right to reject any nomination without assigning any reason. It is also not responsible for any postal loss/delays.

**9.16** Incomplete nominations in any respect shall not be considered for fellowship.

**9.17** The final authority related to the interpretation of the guidelines or any issue left is vested with the ICSSR.

**9.18** Those who have completed their duration of fellowship and if continue to write it with their name, they should prefix 'Former' and suffix 'the duration' with the name of the fellowship e.g. Former National/Senior/Postdoctoral Fellow ICSSR (2016-18).