



Guidelines

Post-Doctoral Fellowship

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

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

Fellowship

1. Introduction

1.1 Post-Doctoral Fellowships are awarded to young and mid-career Indian social science researchers who have completed their Ph.D. and have acumen for conducting globally competitive quality research. The ICSSR promotes and supports evidence-based cutting-edge research having potential to provide solutions to the challenges to development by exploring the themes and subthemes identified by ICSSR.

1.2 The Post-Doctoral Fellowships for the Financial Year 2026-27 shall be awarded in the following areas of Social Sciences:

S.No.	Broad Domains	Priority Areas
1	Economic Development and Public Finance	Agriculture and Rural Innovation
		Entrepreneurship and Start-Ups
		Transition Finance and Carbon Markets
		Blue/Green/Purple/Orange Economy
		Natural Resources and Regional Development
		Sustainable Development and Green Transitions
		FinTech for Development
		Cooperatives and Rural Transformation
		Technology Adoption
		MSMEs and Cluster Development
		GST and Tax Reforms
		Labour, Work, and Industrial Relations
		Circular Economy and Sustainable Supply Chain
		Informal and Gig Economy
		Fiscal Policy and Public Finances
		Intergovernmental Transfers and Incentives
		Cooperative vs. Competitive Federalism
		State-Level Fiscal Reforms
		Bank Regulations
		Macro Economics and Financial System
		State Municipal Trade Policy
		Stock Market
		International Investment
		SEBI (Market Integrity and Regulatory Efficacy of Securities and Exchange Board (SEBI) Interventions)
		Enforcement of Contract
		Financial Viability of Credit Cooperatives
		Economic Inflation and Monetary Policy
		Legal Process for Trade and Economics
Law and Economics		

		Pensions and Income Security
		Ease of Living, Process Reform and Efficiency of Government, Institutional Reforms
		Foreign Portfolio Investors (Drivers and Macroeconomic Volatility)
		Sustainable Tourism
2	Finance, Accounting, and Commerce	Trade and Commerce Dynamics
		Digital Financial Systems
		Financial Literacy: Inclusion and Household Change
		Digital Assets, Crypto Currency and Governance
		E-Commerce and Digital Market Place
		Insolvency and Bankruptcy
		The Evolving Regulatory Landscape for Non- Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)
		Process Reforms and Ease of Doing Business
3	Management and Organisational Studies	Financial Management
		Human Resource Management
		Organisational Behaviour
		CSR, ESG, and Business Ethics
		Operations and Management
		Sustainability Reporting
		Human Capital, Innovation, and Productivity
		Corporate Governance
		Technology and Management
		Inclusive Growth
4	Rural Studies	Rural Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods
		Social Change in Rural Societies
		Rural-Urban Migration and Remittance
		Cultural Landscapes and Identity in Rural India
		Digital Governance in Rural Bharat
		Environmental Resilience and Adaptation Strategies
		Health, Education, and Infrastructure
5	Political Science	E-Governance and State Capacity
		Human Rights and Legislation
		Electoral Systems and Democratic Practices
		Participatory Politics and Social Media
		Politics and Technology
		Indian Political Thought
		Rural-Urban Governance
		Constitutionalism
		Climate Politics and Global Governance
		Women and Politics
6	Governance and Public Administration	Governance and Reforms
		Public Service Delivery

		Digital Governance and Data Platforms
		Decentralization and Local Administration
		Ethical Governance
		Crisis Management and Public Administration
7	Public Policy and Programme Evaluation	Design, Targeting, and Portability of Government Schemes
		Monitoring and Evaluation of Government Schemes
		Policy Experimentation and Evidence Use
		Social Protection
		Digital Public Services
		Public Policy and Welfare
		Grievance Management
8	International Relations and Geopolitics	Indo-Pacific and Southeast Asian Strategy and Maritime Affairs
		Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power
		Global South Diplomacy and South-South Cooperation
		Multilateralism and Global Institutions
		Energy Security
		Geopolitical Transitions
9	National Security and Strategic Studies	Internal Security
		Borders and Irregular Migration
		Information/Cyber Warfare and Hybrid Threats
		Maritime Security
		Defence and National Security
		Defence Manufacturing and Infrastructure
		Non-Traditional Security Threats and Terrorism
10	Legal Studies	Access to Justice and Para-Legal Systems
		Legal History of India
		Judicial Reforms and Court Management
		Law, Technology, And Digital Rights (Including AI)
		Legal Pluralism
		Elder Abuse and Protection
		Criminal Justice System and Reform
		Decolonising Legal Studies
11	Sociology, Social Work, and Community Practice	Vulnerabilities and empowerment
		Food, Nutrition, Culture, and Society
		Urbanisation and Informal Settlements
		Informal Work and Domestic Labour
		Ageing and Care
		Education and Technology
		Land Records Digitisation and Governance
		Tenancy Rights and Sharecropping
		Rental Housing Affordability
		Property Rights, Credit, and Welfare

		Migrant Integration and Housing Markets
		Technology and Media
12	Social Anthropology	Linguistic and Cultural Anthropology
		Ethnography and Field Methods
		Development Anthropology
		Religion, Ritual, and Social Cohesion
		Infrastructure, Urban Change, and Livelihoods
		Kinship and Changing Institutions
		Prehistoric Cultures
		Cultural Survival
		Bio-Cultural Studies of Health and Disease
13	Gender Studies	Gender, Work, and Informal Sectors
		Gender and Environment
		Women, STEM and Digital Transformation
		Gender and Education
		Gender and Health
		Intersectionality, Access, and Inclusion
14	Divyangjan Studies	Intersectional Disability Studies
		Policy and Legal Frameworks
		Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology
		Financial Inclusion and Livelihoods
		Digital Accessibility
		Mobility and Transport
		Culture and Media Representation
		Inclusive Infrastructure
		Stigma and Discrimination
15	Janjatiya Studies	Indigenous knowledge Systems
		Culture and Society
		Language Preservation and Documentation
		Digital Inclusion and Youth Aspirations
		Comparative Development
		Tribal Education and National Education Policy Inclusion
		Welfare Program/schemes (PM-JANMAN, EMRS, FRA-2006, SCA to TSS/TSP, PMAAGY, ITDP, TRIFED, PESA-1996, MSP for MFP, PMJVM, AMSY and NSTFDC)
		Intra-tribal and Inter-community Dynamics
16	Diaspora Studies	Diaspora Contributions to Development
		Multiculturalism, Migration, and Integration
		Economic Engagement and Entrepreneurship
		Identity, Literature, and Memory
17	Social Psychology	Mental Health and Culturally Responsive Care
		Indian Psychology and Social Contexts
		Digital Life and Well-being

		Workplace Well-being
		Community Relations and Inter-group Dynamics
		Social Influence and Behaviour Change
18	Public Health and Health Systems	One Health
		AYUSH and Community Medicine
		Indigenous Healing Practices
		Preventive and Social Medicine
		Community Medicine
		Food Cultures and Nutrition
		Child Nutrition and Growth
		Sports, Fitness, and Prevention
		Digital Health and Telemedicine
		Rural/urban Primary Care and Quality
		AI in Public Health
		Ethnomedicines and Integrative Systems
		Ageing, Long-Term Care, and Social Insurance
		Long-Term Care Systems and Financing
		Mental Health and Suicidality
		Health Infrastructure
		Rural Ageing and Community-based Models
		Mental Health in Post-pandemic Societies
19	Education and Skilling	Digital Learning and EdTech
		Implementation and Governance of the National Education Programme
		Values and Ethics in Education
		AI in Education
		Skilling Youth
		HEI Reforms
		Skill Education in HEIs
		Internationalisation and Mobility
		Academic Governance and Leadership
		Early Learning
		Digital Skilling and Employment
		Teacher Education and Capacity Building
		Indian knowledge System Integration
20	Human Geography and Spatial Planning	Demographic Transitions
		Migration, Displacement, and Spatial Mobility
		Human Capital, Livelihoods, and Regional Development
		Rural-Urban Transformations
		Disaster Risk and Vulnerability
		Urban Resilience, Smart Cities, and Sustainable Futures
		Public Transit, BRT, and Metro Systems
		Road Safety Reforms and Enforcement

		Air Quality and Health
		Gendered Mobility and Labour Force Participation
		Logistics and Last-Mile Connectivity
		Work, Social Mobility, and Transport
		Community Adjustment and Social Resilience
21	Environmental Studies	Human-Environment Interactions
		Impacts, Mitigation, and Adaptation of Climate Change
		SDGs in the Indian Context
		Renewable and Clean energy
		Social Influence on Biodiversity, Wildlife, Soil, and Water
		Environmental Policy and Governance
		Community-Based Climate Adaptation
		Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Indigenous Practices
		Water Service Quality, Continuity, and Equity
		Faecal-Sludge Management and Sanitation
		Peri-Urban Groundwater and Contamination
		Time Poverty, Gender, and WASH Access
		Urban Utilities Access and Regulation
		Social Awareness and Uptake
		History and Heritage
22	Modern Social History	Conservation and Heritage Management
		Memory, Identity, and Public History
		Archaeology, Architecture, and Monuments
		Maritime and Coastal Histories
		Decolonisation, Nationalism, and Historiography
		Digital History and Archival Innovation
		History of Education and Knowledge Systems
		Print Cultures
		Partition Studies
23	Cultural Studies	Digital Humanities
		Life, Literature, and Thought in India
		Literature and Globalisation
		Folk, Oral Forms, and Practices
		Medical Humanities
		Language, Literature, and Popular Culture
		Media and Language Shifts
		Intellectual Traditions and Social Thought
		Cultural Heritage and Traditions
24	Indian Languages, Linguistics, and Translation Studies	Knowledge Traditions in Indian Languages
		Vernacular Knowledge and Applications
		Technology-Language Interface
		Comparative Grammar and Linguistics

		Multilingual Pedagogy and Translation Tools
25	Sociolinguistics and Multilingualism	Language, Culture, and Society
		Social Concepts and Theories in Indian Languages
		Science Across Indian Languages
		Multilingualism in Education and Work
		Language, Media, and Technology
26	Sanskrit Studies	Grammatical Traditions and Poetics
		Manuscriptology and Textual Criticism
		Literary and Aesthetic Traditions
		Sanskrit and Indian Knowledge Systems
		Sanskrit in Contemporary Discourse
		Dharmashastra and Commentarial Traditions
		Computational Sanskrit and Digital Archiving
		Cross-Cultural Aesthetics and Linguistic Interface
27	Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)	Indian Epistemologies
		Indigenous Innovation, Technology, and Development
		Textual and Oral Traditions
		Pedagogies From Indian Intellectual Texts
		Indian Approaches to Ecology and Sustainability
		Mind and Consciousness
		Aesthetic and Performative Traditions
		IKS-Public Policy Interface
		IKS and Law
		Digital Humanities and IKS
		Art and Architecture
		Curriculum Integration
28	Socio-Philosophical Studies	Indian Philosophical Systems
		Comparative Ethics
		AI Ethics and Emerging Technologies
		Philosophy of Mind and Consciousness
		Decolonising Philosophy in India
		Philosophy of Ecology and Sustainability
		Intercultural Ideas and Comparative Philosophy
29	Media and Communication Studies	Mass Media and Sociocultural Change in India
		On Demand Platforms and Services (OTT) in Popular Culture and Identity
		Regional Languages, Media, and Journalism
		Digital News, Platforms, and Misinformation
30	Library and Information Science	E-Resources and IT Applications
		Metadata Harvesting and Digital Repositories
		Scholarly Communication and Publishing Studies
		AI In Library and Information Services
		Knowledge Curation and Digital Preservation

		Open Access, Open Data, Open Science
		One Nation, One Subscription (ONOS): National Knowledge Access and Research Equity Initiative
		Research Designs and Methods in the Social Sciences and Humanities
		Data Quality, Linkages, and Disclosure
		Ethics, Consent, and Data Governance
		Reproducibility and Replication
		Methods, Interoperability, and Safeguards for India's Digital Public Infrastructure
31	Social Inclusion Studies	Social Justice and Intersectional Perspectives
		Constitutional Legislation and Acts for Social Inclusion
		Social Inclusion in Education, Employment, and Digital Spaces
		Political Representation and Inclusion
		Affirmative Action and Social Policy Outcomes
		Inclusion Through Technology and Digital Citizenship
		Comparative Studies of Inclusion and Empowerment
		Government Schemes and Policies for the Upliftment of Marginalized Groups
32	Decolonization (of)	Theories
		Disciplines (such as Economics, Sociology, Political studies, Psychology, History, Anthropology, Cultural Studies, etc.)
		Field of Studies
		Methodologies
		Epistemologies

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 The researcher should be an Indian citizen and should not be more than 45 years of age as on the last date of application. There shall be an age relaxation of 5 years for SC/ST/Persons with Benchmark Disability candidates.

2.2 The scholar must possess a Ph.D. Degree at the time of application and his/her competence to conduct research must be reflected in his/her publications.

2.3 The researcher must affiliate himself/herself to a public funded Indian university/ deemed-to-be-university/college having approved Ph.D. programme, an ICSSR Research Institute/Institutes of national importance approved by MoE/government research institutes. Funds shall be disbursed to the selected fellows through the affiliating institution.

2.4 The selected fellow has to work under the guidance of a senior social scientist (not below the level of an Associate Professor with proven research supervision experience and publications). The supervisor should be a serving faculty in the affiliating institution. The selection of the supervisor is subject to the approval of the ICSSR.

3 How to Apply

3.1 Applications will be invited through open advertisement on ICSSR website and its social media platforms.

3.2 The candidates shall submit online application. The research proposal should be submitted only in the format attached with the application form. No separate research proposal or copies of research papers are to be attached.

3.3 The Research Proposal should either be in Hindi or English (Use Unicode 8 (UTF-8) to fill the form in Hindi)

3.4 One applicant can submit only one application under Post-Doctoral Fellowship scheme. However, he/she can apply separately for another scheme.

4. Procedure for the Award

4.1 The procedure for the award of the fellowship will include evaluation and interaction/presentation of applications by the panel of subject experts in multiple phases.

4.2 The recommendations of the Expert Committee(s) are placed before the requisite Committee(s) of ICSSR for their consent / approval.

4.3 The list of selected applications will be uploaded on ICSSR website. Only the selected candidates and their affiliating universities shall be informed individually through a provisional award letter specifying the formalities and documents required for joining the fellowship.

5. Duration and Value

5.1 Post-Doctoral Fellowship is a full-time research engagement.

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

5.3 The value of fellowship is Rs.31,000/- per month and contingency grant of Rs.25,000/- per annum and will be in line with the directives of the Ministry of Education from time to time.

6 Joining & Release of Fellowship

6.1 The scholar has to join the fellowship preferably within the time given in the award letter by submitting all required documents through the affiliating institution. This may be extended by the ICSSR in exceptional circumstances.

6.2 The fellowship will be sanctioned initially for a period of one year, effective from the date of joining 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 instalment after receiving a satisfactory Six-Monthly Progress Report in the prescribed format along with the Statement of Account to be issued by the Affiliating Institution.

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 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 the submission of the audited statement of accounts with utilization certificate in GFR-12A Form and verification of the documents by the ICSSR.

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

7. Monitoring of Fellowship

7.1 Regular monitoring of Fellowship is done on the basis of Six Monthly and Annual Progress Reports in the prescribed format submitted by the scholar. In case of delayed Progress Reports, the scholar may be asked to give the justification of the delay on which the final decision shall be taken by the ICSSR. The scholar may be asked to furnish an Undertaking specifying the date of final report submission to the ICSSR.

7.2 The fellowship may be discontinued if research progress is found unsatisfactory or any ICSSR rule is violated and the fellow has to reimburse the total fellowship disbursed by the ICSSR till the date of termination of fellowship.

7.3 The ICSSR may ask for annual presentation/mid-term appraisal of the research work.

7.4 During the course of the fellowship, the fellow is required to publish at least two research papers in peer-reviewed research journals on the theme of the research undertaken.

7.5 The scholars must give due acknowledgement to ICSSR while getting their research papers published.

8 Completion of Fellowship

8.1 If a fellow leaves the fellowship within one year, he/she has to submit a detailed progress report of the work done during that period ensuring the final settlement of account by the affiliating institution up to the period of the fellowship. However, if a fellow leaves the fellowship after one year, he/she may be asked to submit the final report on completion of the duration of fellowship without claiming fellowship of the remaining period. If a candidate leaves the fellowship without completion, he/she will have to refund the entire amount of fellowship to the ICSSR within three months of end of fellowship duration.

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 on accepting the final report and releasing the balance amount of fellowship including contingency.

8.2 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 (3000-4000 words) and two research papers published in peer-reviewed journals on the theme of the research undertaken.
- b.** These documents are to be submitted in hard copy (two copies of final report and two copies each of the Summary and research articles) and a soft copy.
- c.** Statement of Accounts with Utilization Certificate in GFR-12A Form duly signed by the competent authority of the affiliating institution.

8.3 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 reports that have similar contents beyond 10 percent on Similarity Index.

9 Expectations from the Affiliating Institution

9.1 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 affiliating/administering institution overhead charges of seven and a half percent (7.5%) of the total Fellowship (fellowship amount plus contingency).

9.2 The affiliating institution is required to give an undertaking in the prescribed format contained in the Application Form to administer and manage the ICSSR fellowship, including disbursement of fellowship amount to the fellow.

9.3 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 Fellowship Grant.

9.4 The affiliating institution will be under obligation to ensure submission of the final report and audited Statement of Accounts along with Utilization Certificate (in the prescribed Performa GFR 12-A) duly certified by the competent authority of the institution.

9.5 In case a scholar leaves /discontinues his fellowship after one year, he/she will have to refund the entire amount of fellowship to the ICSSR within three months of end of fellowship duration. This clause is not applicable in cases of death. In such cases, the affiliating institution has to submit death certificate to the ICSSR and provide requisite documents to settle the accounts, including the refund of any unspent balance within three months.

9.6 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.

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

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

10 Other Conditions

10.1 The post-doctoral research work should not be the same as Ph.D. work.

10.2 The contingency grant may be utilized for books, stationery, computer related costs, and the field work expenses related with the research work.

10.3 The Copyright of the manuscript of final report will rest with the ICSSR. 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.

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

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

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

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

10.8 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.

10.9 The research proposal/final report of the fellowship cannot be submitted for the award of any University degree/diploma or funding by any other institution. The ICSSR however, will have no objection if the scholar utilizes the research data for research purpose.

10.10 The change of supervisor and the affiliating institution will be considered only in exceptional circumstances. Transfer of fellowship to another affiliating institution will be further subject to submission of the following documents:

- (1) Satisfactory progress report;
- (2) Acceptance from the new affiliating institution;
- (3) Consent letter along with C.V. of the new supervisor;
- (4) Audited statement of account and utilization certificate along with unspent balance, if any.

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

10.12 The selected fellows are expected to do full time research in India. They can, 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. However, ICSSR will not be bound to support such data collection from abroad and the decision of the ICSSR will be final in this regard. In either case, the completion of study should not be consequent upon such data collection support.

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

10.14 The final report submitted by the scholar will be considered satisfactory, only after its evaluation by the ICSSR.

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

10.16 Application submitted against one Call will not be considered for the subsequent Calls.

10.17 The Council reserves the right to reject any application/nomination. It is also not responsible for any postal loss/delays in communication.

10.18 Incomplete applications in any respect shall not be considered for fellowship.

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

10.20 Those who have completed their duration of fellowship may use the prefix 'Former' and suffix 'the duration' with the name of the fellowship e.g. Former National/Senior/Post-Doctoral Fellow ICSSR (20xx-xx).