

O-15012/16/21-Research
Government of India
NITI Aayog
(Governance and Research Vertical)

Sansad Marg, New Delhi
Dated the 11th April, 2022

To,

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<p>3. Dr. Sudipa Majumdar, Symbiosis School of Economics, Department of Symbiosis International (Deemed University) Senapati Bapat Road, Pune —411004 Maharashtra Email: sudipa.maiumdar@sse.ac.in</p>	<p>4. Dr. Mandeep Kaur, Professor University School of Financial Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab Email: mandeep.gndu@gmail.com mandeep.usfs@gndu.ac.in</p>
<p>5. Dr. Rajesh Chakrabarti, Director Management Development Institute Gurgaon Mehrauli Road, Sukhrali Gurgaon-122007 Email: dean-aqc@mdi.ac.in</p>	<p>6. Dr. Atul Kumar Pandey, Associate Professor National Law University, Kerwa Dam Road, Bhopal-462044 Email: atulpandey@nliu.ac.in</p>
<p>7. Dr. Shailesh Rastogi, Professor, Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune Constituent of Symbiosis International (Deemed University) Symbiosis Knowledge Village, Dist: Pune, 412115, Maharashtra Email: shaileshrastogi@sibmpune.edu.in</p>	<p>8. Dr. Jaskiran Arora, Dean School of Management (SOM) and Head-Centre for Teaching and Learning, BML Munjal University, 67, NH 48, Kapriwas, Gurugram, Haryana-122413 Email: jaskiran.arora@bmu.edu.in</p>
<p>9. Dr. Harsh Sharma, Professor & Director, Centre for Public Policy, Governance & Performance, Administrative Staff College (ASCI), Bella Vista, Raj Bhawan Road, Khairatabad, Hyderabad Email: harsh.sharma@asci.org.in</p>	<p>10. Sh. Shabbeer Shaikh, Director Centre of Good Governance, Dr. MCR HRD Institute Campus, Road No 25, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad-500033 Email: shabbeer@cgg.gov.in</p>
<p>11. Dr. KL Prasad, Head, Centre for Policy Studies, Haryana Institute of Public Administration, HIPA Complex, Plot No76, Sector 18, Gurugram-122001 Email: klprasad1109@gmail.com</p>	<p>12. Sh. Debabrata Ghosh, Partner, KPMG Advisory services Pvt Ltd Building No 10, 8th Floor, Tower c, DLF Cyber, Phase II, Gurugram-122002 Email: debabrata@kpmg.com</p>
<p>13. Sh. Swapnil Shekhar, Vice President Strategy and Partnership, Sambodhi Research and Communications, c-126, sector 2, Noida, UP- 201301 Email: sudhanshu.malhotra@sambodhi.co.in</p>	<p>14. Dr. Poonam Munjal, Sr. Fellow NCAER, Parisila Bhawan, 11, I P Estate, New Delhi-110002 Email: pmunjal@ncaer.org</p>
<p>15. Sh. Amol Kulkarni, Director Research, CUTS International, D-217, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur-302016 Email: amk@cuts.org</p>	<p>16. Dr. Anshu Singh, Research Associate, Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS), 25, Bhai Vir Singh Marg, Gole Market, New Delhi, Delhi 110001. director@cwds.ac.in Email: director@cwds.ac.in</p>

Letter of Invitation (LoI)

Subject: Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Research Study on “Status of Digital Literacy India, Bottlenecks & Way Forward”

Reference NITI Aayog’s Public Notice of even number dated 04 January, 2022 inviting expressions of Interest (EoI) for conducting research/study on the subject topic. NITI Aayog has received response of 32 organizations/institutes expressing their interest to conduct study. Based on the Research Scheme of NITI Aayog (RSNA) guidelines and further with the criteria of NIRF ranking (overall top- 100 and domain-wise top-50), policy think tanks of Governments, CSO and private organizations (on the basis of turnover), 16 organizations have been shortlisted.

- 2 You are requested to submit the proposals for undertaking a study on the subject as mentioned above as per this RFP.
- 3 Your proposal shall be sealed in an outer big envelope containing (i) Forwarding letter (ii) sealed technical proposal and (iii) sealed financial proposal separately in envelopes, with the expression ‘**DO NOT OPEN BEFORE the 17.05.2022**’ superscribed on top of the Big envelope. The Topic/ subject of this RFP should also be mentioned on the top of the Big envelope. This shall be sent by **registered post or by hand only** to reach address: Sh. Kulwant Rana, Deputy Secretary (Research), Room No. 401, NITI Aayog, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001 before 16:00 hrs of the **last date of bid submission i.e 17.05.2022**.
- 4 If you request for additional information, the same shall be provided expeditiously, but any delay in providing such information will not be considered as a reason for extending the submission date of your Technical & Financial proposal. For any queries you may write to rana.kulwant@nic.in
- 5 Late tenders will not be considered. No responsibility shall be taken for postal delay or non-delivery/non-receipt by the Governance & Research Vertical. Bid sent by Fax, e-mail, What-Sapp, etc. will not be considered and liable to be rejected.



(Kulwant Rana)

Deputy Secretary (Research)

Tel: 23096749

Email: rana.kulwant@nic.in

Copy to:

1. Adviser (HRD), NITI Aayog
2. Reception Officer, NITI Aayog (for keeping the bids in the Box)
3. File/Folder

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

on

“Status of Digital Literacy India, Bottlenecks & Way Forward”

BID SCHEDULE AND ADDRESS

Sl. No	Description	Detailed Information
1.	EoI Reference	Public Notice dated 04-01-2022
2.	Date of release of Bidding Document	11.04.2022
3.	Last date and time for Bid Submission	17.05.2022 latest by 1600 hrs
4.	Address for Bid Submission	Deputy Secretary (Research), Room No 401, NITI Aayog, Sansad Marg, New Delhi 110001
5.	Mode of Submission of bids	Only by registered post or by hand
6.	Bid Related Queries	Deputy Secretary (Research) Email: rana.kulwant@nic.in
7.	Maximum Bid Cost Ceiling	₹ 50 Lakhs (inclusive of all taxes)

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

Bidding Document

RFP

- a) RFP shall mean Request for Proposal/ bidding document as per Rule 186 of GFR 2017.
- b) Bid, Tender and proposals are interchangeably used to mean the same.
- c) The Bidder is expected to examine all instructions, forms, Terms and Conditions and technical specifications mentioned in the RFP. Submission of a Bid not responsive to the Bidding Document in each and every respect may result in the rejection of its Bid without any further reference to the Bidder.
- d) NITI Aayog reserves the right to take appropriate decision in accordance with General Financial Rule (GFR) 2017; CVC Guidelines issued from time to time; and Research Scheme of NITI Aayog, 2021 as amended from time to time with regard to this RFP process for addressing any situation which is not explicitly covered in the RFP Document.
- e) The bidder must disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest with the NITI Aayog.

Cost of Bidding Document

The Bidder shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of its Bid and NITI Aayog will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs.

Content of Bidding Document

Clarification on/the Amendments of the Bidding Documents:

The bidders are required to provide responses on all the points as mentioned in this RFP document.

Any modification to the Bidding Documents which may become necessary as a result of any queries shall be made by the NITI Aayog by issuing a Corrigendum to the same Bidders who are the recipients of this RFP

Amendment of Bidding Documents:

Any such corrigendum, if issued, will be binding on the Bidders. It will be presumed that the amendments contained in such Corrigendum was taken into account by the concerned Bidder while submitting their technical and financial bids.

In order to give Bidders reasonable time for taking the corrigendum into account in preparing their bids, NITI Aayog may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of bids, and in the case of such an eventuality, the extended deadline will be communicated to all the recipients of the RFP.

From the date of issue, any such corrigendum shall be deemed to form an integral part of the RFP.

All such corrigendum would be issued online on the NITI Aayog website and would be intimated to probable bidders wherever possible.

1. Selection of consultants

- (i) The NITI Aayog, Government of India, hereby invites the bids w.r.t this Request for Proposal (RFP) from organizations as per Para 7.14 of RSNA 2021. It may be noted that *this RFP is not transferable*.

- (ii) For selection of consultants, two-bid system shall be adopted after following the two stage procedure in terms of rules 177 to 195 of General Financial Rules (GFR), 2017.
- (iii) The first stage includes the receiving of the EoIs (Expression of Interest) vide **Public Notices dated 04.01.2022** on the NITI Aayog website and the subsequent shortlisting of the EoIs as per the RSNA 2021 for further consideration into the 2nd stage i.e. RFP Stage. 16 organizations are shortlisted based of different parameters including NIRF Ranking, NIRF ranking in domain, Policy think tanks of Government of India, turn-over of private organisations and civil society organisations.
- (iv) This study would be financed in form of consultancy fee for hiring of professional services in the form of Research Studies under the Research Scheme of NITI Aayog (RSNA), 2021 which may be seen in the website of NITI Aayog at <https://www.niti.gov.in/guidelines> before sending bids to this RFP.

2. Terms of Reference (ToR): The ToR shall include

a) Background

Like other developing countries, India also needs a sufficient thrust to overcome the challenges of exclusion, poverty and inequality. India is in the midst of the greatest demographic and technological transformations. 65.07% of the population of the country is in rural areas, however, digital penetration has also picked up pace in the past few years, thanks to the one of the cheapest rates of the internet globally. In fact, the total number of internet users in India is more than the whole population of USA.

However, who uses the internet remains the question. Almost half of the Indian population does not have access to the internet. Most of the internet users are in urban educated classes. This situation reflects that majority of the Indians still remain unfazed by the information technology revolution. With such a disparity in digital access and literacy, it is hard to aspire for inclusion and equity.

India is expected to have the largest working age population, which requires rapid job creation. Digital literacy becomes a crucial medium of communication with global citizens.

A study on the "**Status of Digital Literacy in India, Bottlenecks & Way Forward**" that can identify the opportunities and challenges faced by India to overcome the prevalent Digital divide is hence required in order to know the current scenarios and calculate the future projections based on the statistical evidences generated on the basis of primary & secondary data and its impact on the overall economic activities of the country across various sector including agriculture, per capita income and GDP.

b) Detailed Scope of Work

The tentative scope of service envisaged for the preparation of study on Digital Literacy in India is as follows:

I. To Study and analyze the status on Digital Literacy

- i. On award of work, the agency shall collect the available data for the Departments, sources relevant to the study. The agency will carry out actions enclosed but not limited to the same.
 - o Understand the status of Digital Literacy of overall population of the country and measures required to improve it.
 - o Understand the status of Digital Literacy of population aging above 40 years and measures required to improve it.
 - o Analysis of State wise data (Based on secondary literature – all States/UT's)

- Understand the status and impact of Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan
- Analysis of State wise data (Based on primary research, for the sample States/UTs)
- Literature review and brief of the studies including recommendations
- ii. Identifying development needs to strengthen Digital Literacy in India
- iii. Suggest recommendations to strengthen existing and new initiatives regarding Digital Literacy
- iv. NEP 2020's vision on Digital Literacy
- v. Initiatives in various Ministries/Departments of Union Government regarding Digital Literacy like Digital India Mission, (encompassing but not limited to DigiDhan Mission, AI for All, National Mission on Digital Literacy, Digital India Program campaign among others)
- vi. National Digital Literacy Schemes among other initiatives and schemes.
- vii. Targets, challenges and achievements in various schemes and missions pertaining to digital literacy

II. Digital Literacy Projections, Correlations and Comparisons

Provide projections and comparisons based on the National/International KPIs. Below are some KPIs, the study is to include below and other indicators.

- i. Impact of Digital Literacy on GDP growth,
- ii. Correlation of Digital Literacy & Purchasing Power Parity (PPP),
- iii. Correlation of Digital Literacy & Per capita Income
- iv. Correlation of Digital Literacy & GDP growth globally (US, UK, China, Singapore, Germany, Dubai) vis-a-vis its comparison to India
- v. Current status of India with respect to Digital Literacy
- vi. Census, NFHS, NSSO data on Digital Literacy
- vii. Identify problems in aligning to Digital India Mission
- viii. National level data comparison

III. Digital-Educational Literacy

- i. Impact of Digital Literacy on Educational Technology sector
- ii. Need and Impact of Assistive Technology for differently abled individuals, in Digital Literacy
- iii. M-learning Technology's Impact and growth in Digital Literacy
- iv. Strengthening Open & Distance Learning (ODL), in digital literacy age
- v. Access to Ed-Tech platforms for Digital Literacy
- vi. Capacity Building in Digital Literacy to maximize output from Ed-Tech
- vii. Online Education & Digital Literacy
- viii. Teacher Training & Digital Literacy

IV. Digital-Financial Literacy

The study will also include the status of digital platforms and their penetration state in the country. Identifying the problem statements, challenges and recommendations to strengthen Digital Literacy across all platforms.

- i. Unified Payments Interface (UPI) usage
- ii. Online Banking
- iii. Payment gateways
- iv. Fast Tech Systems
- v. Need for digital literacy in terms of financial literacy
- vi. Status of Digital – Financial literacy, Bottlenecks, and Way Forward

V. Impact of Digital Literacy on Key sectors like E-Commerce, Agriculture, Health, Food etc. and need of expansion

VI. Correlation between Digital Literacy & Employment generation and its future projections

VII. Identify challenge`s and recommend solutions to strengthen Digital Literacy in India

- i. Comparison between Literacy and Digital Literacy to understand the problem areas around Digital Literacy
- ii. High-Tech and Low-Tech Technologies for Digital Literacy
- iii. Identify regional disparity in Digital Literacy in the country
- iv. Status of Digital Literacy in Post & Pre-COVID times and strategies for India in the field of Digital Literacy to counter future Pandemic
- v. Status of Digital Infrastructure in Schools/Colleges/Institutes/Offices/Departments/Ministries

VIII. Data collection, research and analysis

On award of work the Agency should carry out necessary activities to support the identification of problem statements and recommendations to support the findings.

- i. Carry out surveys in the sample States/UTs to support finding and recommendations
- ii. Data analysis/analytics of the Survey to be carried out
- iii. Preparation of questionnaire for the Survey

IX. Implementation Strategy and Plan

- i. Look critically at information to determine its relevance, suitability and reliability
- ii. Be critical and skeptical about sources and information to ensure authenticity
- iii. Check for accuracy, authenticity and validity as measures of information quality
- iv. Make sure all information and resources are fit for purpose.
- v. Provide recommendations to overcome challenges and problem areas to attain Digital Literacy in India.
- vi. The Agency must suggest mechanisms to strengthen and improve Digital Literacy.
- vii. Agency must avoid any type of plagiarism and the draft study will be examined as per the existing UGC rules regarding Plagiarism.

2.1 Duration of the Study: 6 (Six) months from the Effective Date, unless extended by mutual consent of the Authority and the Consultant.

2.2 Methods of review and Schedule of Research Study:

- i. Starting date of Study: Actual release of 1st instalment by RTGS/ECS/NEFT
- ii. Closing date of Study: After 24 weeks from the effective date
- iii. Submission of 1st draft report within 16 weeks from the effective date
- iv. Submission of the final Draft Report: Last day of completion of 24 weeks period or earlier
- v. Power Point presentation to share findings and recommendations of the draft reports (if any): should be provided
- vi. Submission of Final Project completion report: within 2 months after the closing date of study.
- vii. Any other: If required, a stakeholder consultation may be conducted in NITI Aayog

2.3 Any support or inputs to be provided to the consultant to facilitate this consultancy.

2.4 The final outputs expected from the consultant

3. Proposed Activities (if required):

- (i) Preparation of questionnaires for the Study: [As per need].
- (ii) Data analysis: [As per need].

4. Validity of Proposal:

The proposal shall be valid for a period of one hundred and twenty days (120 days) from the last/closing date of receiving the bids.

5. Reporting and Monitoring Arrangements: As per para 9.1 to 9.3 of RSNA 2021.

6. Deadline for submission of proposals:

- (i) The bid proposal shall be submitted within the stipulated date. The last/closing date for submission of the Bids is **17.05.2022**
- (ii) Address of submitting the proposal: Deputy Secretary (Research), Room No 401, NITI Aayog, Sansad Marg, New Delhi 110001 with the expression **DO NOT OPEN BEFORE the 17.05.2022** 'superscribed on top of the big envelope.

7. Late Proposals:

Any Proposal received by the NITI Aayog after the last/closing date will be summarily rejected.

8. The Consulting Institutions may take up the assignment individually or associate with another organisation/ individual to complement the activities/ role assigned by NITI Aayog. In case of **ajoint collaboration**, all members of the collaboration shall agree to the terms and conditions of the Letter of Approval/RSNA 2021 for the assignment jointly and severally. Under such circumstances, there shall be one lead member of the consulting organisations and NITI Aayog shall deal with the lead member for all the administrative purposes.

9. This bidding process has two components—technical proposal (technical bid) and financial proposal (financial bid) in the prescribed format -It is a Two-Bid system in accordance with Rule 187 of GFR-2017. The technical bid format is as per Annexure 1 and financial bid format is as per Annexure 2 of RFP. To safeguard the integrity of the process, the bids are required to be sealed separately in two envelopes for technical and financial bids respectively. These two sealed envelopes shall be put in a bigger envelope with forwarding letter (Annexure-3 to RFP) which is also to be duly sealed. This may be submitted as the above para.

10. Clarification of proposals:

To assist in the examination, evaluation and comparison of technical Proposals, NITI Aayog may, at its discretion, ask the Bidder for clarification of its technical Proposal. The request for clarification and the response shall be in writing and no change in total budget or substance of the Proposal shall be sought, offered or permitted.

11. Opening of proposals/bids:

- (i) The technical proposals shall be opened first by Research Evaluation Committee (REC) at a suitable date, time and place [to be notified on website/intimated on email] on/after the closing date of receiving bids. The bidders are welcome to be present
- (ii) Date of opening of financial bid will be intimated at later stage after acceptance of the technical bids. The financial bid of only those organisations/ institutions/bidders will be opened whose technical bids are found compliant/ suitable in accordance with provision of RSNA 2021 after technical evaluation is done by REC, NITI Aayog.

12. Format for Technical proposal:

The bidder should provide the proper information for evaluating the technical proposals as per the format given at annexure-1 to the RFP.

13. Evaluation of Technical Bids (50% weightage)

- (i) In the first stage, the Technical Proposal will be evaluated on the basis of Applicant's experience, its understanding of TOR, proposed methodology and Work Plan, and the experience of Key Personnel.
- (ii) Only those Applicants whose Technical Proposals get a score of **50 (Fifty)** marks or more out of 100 (one hundred) shall qualify for further consideration, and shall be ranked from highest to the lowest on the basis of their technical score (ST).
- (iii) The scoring criteria to be used for evaluation shall be as follows.

Scoring Scheme

No	Technical Evaluation Criteria			Max Marks
1	Profile of key personnel and their suitability for assignment in the research study.			25
	Position	Marks	Experience	
	Team Leader/Principal Investigator	10	Min 15 Years	
	Industry Expert in Education Technology	5	Min 10 Years	
	Academia with Experience in utilizing Digital means in Education	5	Min 10 Years	
	Expert with Background in Sociology/Economics/ Education	2.5	Min 5 Years	
	Research Assistant	2.5	Min 3 Years	

2	At least 10 years' experience of the Agency must be mandatory in conducting Research Projects/Reports in the related areas of this subject/theme in collaboration with Union Ministries/Departments, State Ministries/Departments, IITs, IIMs, IISERs, Multilateral Organization like World Bank, WHO, UNISEF, UNECSO, Asian Development Bank, JICA, IMF, EU, AIIB, USAID and Institutions of National Importance (INIs). Number of National level reports in collaboration with Union Ministries/Departments, State Ministries/Departments, IITs, IIMs, IISERs, Multilateral Organization like World Bank, WHO, UNISEF, UNECSO, Asian Development Bank, JICA, IMF, EU, AIIB and Institutions of National Importance (INIs) should be at least 10. Each such Report would be of 2 marks.	40
3	Relevance and need of the study to NITI Aayog and capability of knowledge transfer.	10
	Sections	Marks
	Relevance and Need of the study	05
	Capability of Knowledge Transfer	05
4	Chapterisation, contents and lay out of the proposed report.	05
5	Methodology & sample Design, Work Plan/Execution Strategy, and use of statistical design & tools. The agency should have arrangements of quality control.	20
	Sections	Marks
	Methodology and Sample Design	05
	Work Plan / Execution Strategy	05
	Use of Statistical Design and Tools	10
	TOTAL	100

Scoring Methodology

Team Position	Marks	Minimum Educational Qualification
Team Leader/Principal Investigator	10	Ph.D. in Public Policy/Education/Economics/Sociology
Industry Expert in Education Technology	5	Master's degree in Computer Science/IT/Data Science
Academia with Experience in utilizing Digital means in Education	5	Master's degree in Computer Science/IT/Data Science/Sociology/Economics/Public Policy/Education
Expert with Background in Sociology/Economics/ Education	2.5	Master's degree in Education/Sociology/Economics/Public Policy
Research Assistant	2.5	Bachelor degree In Computer Science/IT/Data Science

- (iv) The names of successful technically qualified bidders, who have satisfied the minimum qualifying marks, shall be notified on the NITI Aayog website/or intimated on email.
- (v) NITI Aayog or any successor body replacing the same reserves the right to do a reference check on the organisation's background and work. The maximum scores noted in the evaluation sheet are tentative and can be changed depending on the need or major attributes of technical proposal.
- (vi) After evaluation of technical bids, the names of the bidders/consultants whose proposals did not meet the minimum qualifying score or were considered non-responsive to the RFP, their financial proposals will be discarded unopened after completing the selection process.

14. Format for Financial Proposal:

The bidder should provide the proper information for evaluating the financial proposals as per the format given at Annexure-2 to RFP.

15. Opening of Financial Bids:

The financial proposals/ bids of these technically qualified bidders, which has scored a minimum of **50 marks**, shall be opened by REC within 7 working days of notification on the NITI Aayog website/or date of intimation email. The bidders are welcome to be present during this process.

16. Evaluation of Financial Bids: (30% weightage)

- (i) The name of the consultant, the technical scores, and the indicated prices shall be read aloud and recorded when the financial proposals are opened.
- (ii) In the financial proposal, the total proposed cost indicated by the bidder would be taken for determination of Lowest bidder.
- (iii) The REC will then examine if there are any arithmetical errors that need to be corrected in the total amount and decisions of REC shall be absolute and final.
- (iv) For the purpose of evaluation, the total cost shall include all the taxes as applicable.
- (v) If there are conditions attached to any financial proposal, the REC shall reject any such proposals as non-responsive to this RFP.
- (vi) The Financial Proposal shall take into account all expenses related to the study including all taxes. All payments shall be subjected to deduction of taxes at source as per applicable laws. Costs (including break up of costs) shall be expressed in INR (₹).
- (vii) At the End, the REC shall prepare a financial bid evaluation report.

17. Selection of Winning Consultant:

- (i) The selection will be as per —Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method as given in Rule 192 of GFR 2017.
- (ii) A final combined score (H) shall be made thereby allotting 70% weightage to technical score and 30% weightage to financial score.
- (iii) The organisation getting the highest combined score (H1) shall be called for the power point presentation at the level of Chairman of REC or Adviser of concerned SV/D, if deemed necessary. If the organisation fails to exhibit necessary expertise to carry out the study then the subsequent bidders (H2, H3, etc.) shall be called for power point presentation and the study shall be awarded upon satisfaction of NITI Aayog regarding capability of the organisation to undertake the study.
- (iv) The REC will prepare a final bid evaluation report based on the weighted scores of technical

bid and financial bid, and may give the recommendation for award of study. The decisions of the REC shall be final and binding upon the applicants/bidders.

18. Release of funds/consultancy fee: as per the para 7.15 and 7.16 of RSNA 2021 guidelines.

19. Required Documents with Technical Bid (if not submitted at EoI stage):

The proposal shall be submitted by the Head of the concerned Institutions/Organisations or PI or by an authorized officer of the institution empowered to execute legal documents on behalf of the institution along with the following requisite documents:-

- (i) Copy of Registration Certificate of the Institution/Organisation **OR** Articles of Association {Copy of the Constitution/MOA (Memorandum of Association) of the Institute/Any letter issued by UGC if University}
- (ii) Registration Number in NGO-Portal —Darpan of NITI Aayog and its copy, if applicable.
- (iii) Photo copy PAN card of the organisation
- (iv) **'Undertaking'**: "The [Institute/ Organisation/University (name only)] has not obtained or applied for assistance for the same purpose/activity for [Name of the event to be mentioned] from any Ministry/Department of Central Government / State Governments. It is solely depending on assistance of NITI Aayog".

20. Rejection of all proposals and re-invitation:

The NITI Aayog will have the right to reject all proposals. However, such rejections should well be considered and normally would be done in the bids which deviate to the Terms & Conditions of RFP. NITI Aayog also reserves the right to accept or reject any Proposal, and to annul the solicitation process and reject all Proposals at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or any obligation to inform the affected Bidder or Bidders of the grounds for the action such taken.

21. GENERAL TERMS & CONDITIONS:

The study shall be undertaken as per the Terms and conditions mentioned in para 11 of Research Scheme of NITI Aayog (RSNA) 2021 which is available on the website of NITI Aayog at <https://www.niti.gov.in/guidelines>. This is also given as Annexure-4 to RFP.

Format for Technical Proposal for Research Study

A. Contents of Technical Proposal

1. Name of the Topic
2. Objectives of the study
3. Brief literature review and underlying concepts/ theories on which the study is based
4. Selection of study area (if any)
5. Methodology (including sample design)
6. Statistical Design including Tools and Software required. This also includes (i) Reference period or base year of the proposed study, (ii) Selection of data (primary/ secondary), (iii) whether it's a sample survey, case study or other (please specify), (iv) type of hypothesis to be tested, (v) case studies to verify hypothesis (if any)
7. Relevance and need of the study (How does it help in contribution to policy process and knowledge transfer for NITI Aayog as a think tank of Govt. of India): a brief note in bullet points of 200 words
8. Chapterisation, contents and lay out of the proposed report

B. Profile of Key Personnel & their suitability for the assignment in the research study

This includes (i) educational qualifications, research experience and details of publication in the national and international journals, (ii) address, telephone number, email ID, fax number and any other relevant details (in a brief CV) of:

1. Principal Investigator (PI)
2. Co- Principal Investigator(s) (Co-PI)
3. Other Professionals and Supporting Staff for this research study

C. Experience of the organisation in conducting research projects/reports in the above subject/ themes for Government Departments/ Reputed Institutes in the last 10 years

Name of the Person	Team Position	Educational Qualification	Experience (Years)	Study	Name of the Organisation /Agency	Month/year	Publication in any journals (Name & Address with impact factor)

D. Brief of the Organisation/ Institution

1. (a) Brief bio-data of the head of the institution with contact details (mobile no., email & fax in one page only), (b) Research expertise and infrastructure facilities available for conducting research work in the proposed area(s),

2. Name and contact details of 2 key persons of the organisation other than the head, PI and Co-PI.
3. List of Branches of the Institution (if any) with address and telephone numbers and name and designation of the nodal person of each branch.

E. Proposed Work Plan and execution strategy

S. No.	Items	Duration (in days/ months)
1.	Date/ Days of Commencement of work after getting LoA of NITI Aayog	
2.	Preparatory work including Selection of Staff, Pilot Study (if any), and Schedule of Sample Drawing	
3.	Data Collection and analysis schedules	
4.	(i) Submission of 1 st draft report	
	(ii) Submission of final draft report	
5.	Organising a Workshop or Power Point presentation (if required by nodal vertical) before submitting the project completion report in book bound form	
6.	project completion report to be submitted	
	Total Duration:	

F. Other Information

- (i) Have the organisation submitting proposal or any of its collaborating partners been penalized by any organization for poor quality of work or breach of contract in the last five years? Yes/No (If Yes details thereof).
- (ii) Have the organisation submitting proposal or any of its collaborating partners ever failed to complete any work awarded to it by any Public Sector Undertaking/Ministry/ Department/NITI Aayog in last 5 years? Yes/No (If Yes details thereof).
- (iii) Have the organisation submitting proposal or any of its collaborating partners been blacklisted by any Government department/Ministries/Public Sector Undertaking in the last five years? Yes/No (If Yes details thereof).
- (iv) Whether this organisation is Blacklisted or debarred from receiving any grant from the Govt. for any specific period? Yes/No (If Yes..define)

Name and Signature of the Principal Investigator(P I)

Name and Signature of the Head of the Institution/ Registrar (if university) / Principal(if college)

Date :

Place

Official Seal

Format for Financial Proposal of Research Study: {Name}**I. Consultancy****Fee:**

SI No.	Persons	Duration	Amount (₹)
i)	Principal Investigator (PI) (only one)	Whole study period	
ii)	Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) (one or two)	Specify the period	
iii)	Research Staff:	Specify the period	
iv)	Field Staff:	Specify the period	

II. Travel and DA:

(a) Domestic Traveling: There may be admissible for domestic travel only. No International travel is permitted unless prior approval is taken from NITI Aayog.

SI No.	Persons	Amount (₹)
i)	Principal Investigator (PI)	
ii)	Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)	
iii)	For field /research staff:	

(b) DA as per the following

SI No.	Persons	Duration	Amount (₹)
i)	Principal Investigator (PI)	No. of Days	
ii)	Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)	No. of Days	
iii)	For field /research staff:	No. of Days	

III. Other Miscellaneous Expenses

Particulars	Amount (₹)
(a) Data Processing including computation & Computer Work	
(b) Stationery, printing and photocopying	
(c) Overheads/ Institutional Fee	
(d) Any other – (i) For hiring services of technocrats /experts / testing laboratory etc. if required, for a fixed duration on consolidated amount or (ii) Holding Workshop/Debate discussion: For expert advice and suggestions of the group of distinguished scholars /researchers, in case, of revamping and improving the quality of the study, that should specifically be justified in the proposal along with details of participating scholars/ researchers /luminaries from the field of the subject concerned.	

IV. Proposed Budget (i.e. I+II+III): ₹.....

V. Contingency (3% of the proposed Budget): ₹.....

VI. GST/ Taxes (if any): ₹.....

Total Budget (including GST/ all taxes): ₹ (in words)

Name and Signature of the Head of the
Institution/Name and Signature of the Principal Registrar (if university) /Principal (if
college) Investigator (PI)

Date:

Place

Forwarding Letter

I have the pleasure in forwarding the research proposal entitled as —..... for financial support to NITI Aayog (G&R vertical).

2. The organisation agrees to administer this research project, manage its finances, provide accommodation, furniture and the research facilities such as library, equipment, secretarial staff, etc. required for research study. The organization shall also provide the material and managerial assistance for the research study, which would be considered under the proposed '**Overhead**' cost.

3. It is certified that no similar research proposal has been submitted for funding to any other Ministry/ Departments of central/state governments.

4. It is certified that the Principal Investigator (PI) _____ [name] _____ shall continue with the organisation till the completion of the proposed study. **In the instance of the PI leaving the organisation without completing the study, the organisation undertakes to get the study completed by appointing a new PI, without any additional financial liability on the part of the NITI Aayog and within the stipulated time.** However, if the NITI Aayog desires to transfer the project to some other institution, this Institution will have no objection to the same.

**Signature and Seal of the Head of the Institution /Registrar (if university)
/Principal (if college)**

(Official Seal)

Date:

Place

:

11. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 11.1 All the communications including intimation regarding 1st Draft/ final draft/ Project Completion Report of research study/white paper/research work etc. will be submitted to Deputy Secretary, Governance and Research Vertical, NITI Aayog, Room No 401, Sansad Marg, New Delhi by the PI or Head of the organisation/individual.
- 11.2 **Copyright:** NITI Aayog would have the intellectual property rights for all the research studies/ white papers/research work outsourced. Prior permission of NITI Aayog would be necessary before such studies/white paper/research work could be publicized by the organisations/ bodies/individuals concerned. The soft copy of this study shall be put up in the official website of NITI Aayog for wider circulation. The NITI Aayog may grant permission for publication in any form (Book/Journal/Newspaper) generally after 6 months of submission of the Project Completion Report of the assigned study/white paper/research work. Request for any financial assistance for bringing out such publication under the RSNA will not be entertained.
- 11.3 **Adherence to Timelines in case of research study:** The assignment should be completed within the time line stipulated in the Letter of Approval (LoA). Unless extension is approved by NITI Aayog in writing, the delay in submission of the project completion report beyond the stipulated time will attract penalty as per the penal provisions of the bond executed by the consultant. This penalty shall be calculated on the released funds and would be deducted from the last/remaining installment(s).
- 11.4 The consultant organization/individual shall have to carry out the Research Study as per the provisions in these guidelines and Letter of Approval (LoA). In case of any breach of the terms and conditions, the remaining amount would be forfeited and the organization/individual shall have to refund the released amount with penal interest @ 11.5% compounded annually.
- 11.5 NITI Aayog, in case of research study, if desired, may carry out site visit for review of field survey/work being carried out by the consulting organisation for the study. Officials from Governance & Research Vertical and/ or SV/Ds or any other persons may be deputed to make field visit(s) for monitoring and verifying the genuineness of the study or respondents.
- 11.6 Foreign travel is not allowed under this scheme unless this is considered necessary in terms of objectives of the study and the same is duly approved in writing by NITI Aayog.
- 11.7 The persons employed in the research study project will be treated as the employees of the consultant organization only. The conditions of their service will be governed in accordance with the rules and order of that consultant organisation as applicable to such personnel.
- 11.8 The Consultant organisation or PI/Co-PI of the project/individual expert will not accept any financial assistance from any other source(s) for the same project assigned under the scheme.
- 11.9 In case of research study, the organisation shall provide permanent infrastructure facilities, viz., accommodation, furniture, research facilities, library, laboratory, equipment, secretarial & managerial staff and material required for the project for which a budget provision may be made by the Organisation under—Overheads.
- 11.10 The Research Study, funded under the RSNA, should generally have a single PI, whose credentials will be as per the requirements of the study. There may also be one or two

- Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PI), who will support the PI. The names of the PI and the Co- PIs will be specified in the Letter of Approval (LoA).
- 11.11 The Consultant Organisation or the PI or his associates or individual expert shall not share the data collected for the assigned research study/white paper/research work with any other person/organisation without the prior approval of the NITI Aayog. Theresearch study shall not be used by the PI or his associates or anybody else for the preparation of any doctoral thesis/ dissertation or for other degrees/diplomas or publication(s) without the prior approval of the NITI Aayog.
 - 11.12 In case of research study, the Organisation or the PI shall make suitable arrangements forthe safe custody of raw data and other documents related to the study for a period of one year after completion of the research study. The NITI Aayog may ask for perusal/review of raw or processed data at any time.
 - 11.13 In case of research study, if the PI associated with the project leaves the Institution/ Organisation at any stage after the commencement of the research study, the project may be continued by either appointing (i) a new PI by the institute, or (ii) an eligible Co-PI who could be considered as the PI, subject to recommendation of the Head of the Consultant organisation and the approval of the NITI Aayog. Such request should be sent well in advance preferably within 15 days after the leaving of the original PI. The same wouldapply in case change is to be made with respect to Co-PIs.
 - 11.14 The concerned organization/individual expert will have to bear all responsibilities regardingany discrepancy and irregularity in the funding w.r.t. the sanctioned studies.
 - 11.15 NITI Aayog reserves the right of seeking additional information including copies of the other project completion report or Audited annual statement of accounts while examining individual cases.
 - 11.16 During the course of the study/white paper/research work, there might be some changes in the scope of the study depending upon circumstances on mutual agreements only.The samemay have to be carried out by the Organisation/individual expert without any additional compensation.
 - 11.17 NITI Aayog reserves the right to reject and re-invite any of the proposals.
 - 11.18 No capital expenditure will be incurred from the assistance provided for the project.
 - 11.19 The liability of payment of the tax will be of the Organisation/individual expert.
 - 11.20 **Plagiarism:** The consultant organisation may certify while submitting the study report that the content of the report is original and has not been plagiarized. The concerned SV/D may also check for plagiarism at the draft stage of the report.
 - 11.21 **Termination:** This contract may be terminated by both parties upon 30 days' notice period. If the consultant Organisation/ individual expert terminate the contract then it shall refund the credited amount/fee with penal interest. However, NITI Aayog may permit the Organisation/individual expert to retain part of the fee paid depending upon the services already rendered. NITI Aayog may also terminate this contract in whole or in part, in writing to the assigned organisation/individual expert. The initiation of arbitration proceedings in accordance with "settlement of disputes" stated below shall not be deemed a termination of this contract. In the event of any termination by theNITI Aayog, no payment shall be paid to the agency/individual expert except for work and services satisfactorily performed in conformity with the terms and conditions of the contract. The agency/individual expert shall take immediate steps to terminate the work and services in a prompt and orderly manner and to minimize losses and further expenditures. Should the

agency/individual expert be adjudged bankrupt, or be liquidated or become insolvent, or should the agency make an assignment for the benefit of its creditors, or should a receiver be appointed on account of the insolvency of the agency, the NITI Aayog may, without prejudice to any other right or remedy it may have, terminate this contract forthwith. The agency/individual expert shall immediately inform the NITI Aayog of the occurrence of any of the above events.

11.22 SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

- (i) **Amicable settlement:** The parties shall use their best efforts to settle amicably any dispute, controversy or claim arising out of, or relating to this contract or the breach, termination or invalidity thereof.
- (ii) **Arbitration:**
 - (a) In the event of any dispute or difference between the parties hereto, such disputes or differences shall be resolved amicably by mutual consultation. If such resolution is not possible, then the unresolved dispute or difference shall be referred to arbitration of the sole arbitrator to be appointed by the CEO, NITI Aayog. In case it is felt necessary to do so, the Department of Legal Affairs would be consulted in an appropriate manner. The provisions of Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 (No. 26 of 1996) shall be applicable to the arbitration.
 - (b) All litigations will be subject to Delhi Jurisdiction. The venue of such arbitration shall be New Delhi only.
 - (c) The language of arbitration proceedings shall be English. The arbitrator shall make a reasoned award (the —Award), which shall be final and binding on the parties.
 - (d) The cost of the arbitration shall be shared equally by the parties to the agreement. However, expenses incurred by each party in connection with the preparation, presentation shall be borne by the party itself.
 - (e) Pending the submission of and/or decision on a dispute, difference or claim or until the arbitral award is published; the Parties shall continue to perform all of their obligations under this scheme without prejudice to a final adjustment in accordance with such award.