

**F.No.O-15026/1/18- G&R**  
**Government of India**  
**NITI Aayog**  
**(Governance & Research Vertical)**

Sansad Marg, New Delhi — 110001  
Dated: the 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2022

**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Subject: “Research Scheme of NITI Aayog (RSNA) – 2021” - Part A (Guidelines for Research Studies) – Amendments reg.**

In order to stimulate and encourage research and studies deemed necessary for achievement of the country’s development objectives, NITI Aayog has put in place "Research Scheme of NITI Aayog", the guidelines of which were last issued vide Office Memorandum F.No. O-15018 /1/ 18 – G&R dated May 17, 2021. It has been decided to carry out the following amendments to the Research Scheme of NITI Aayog (RSNA) – 2021 guidelines:-

- a. the para 7.11 of RSNA is amended to the extent that the financial limit of studies under the empanelment category shall be ₹ 50 lakhs.
  - b. the Para 7.14 of RSNA (I) PROCEDURE FOR CONSULTANCY THROUGH ADVERTISEMENT Stage-I (ii) is amended to the extent that ‘the topic(s) would be published on Central Public Procurement Portal (CPPP) at [www.eprocure.gov.in](http://www.eprocure.gov.in) and on NITI Aayog website.’
3. A copy of the "Research Scheme of NITI Aayog [RSNA] — 2021 — Part A [Guidelines for Research Studies] as amended " is enclosed herewith for information and necessary action.
- 4 This issues with the concurrence of IFD vide diary No. 21812 dated 4.07.2022 and approval of the competent authority.

Encl: As above



(Kulwant Rana)

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India

Tele: 23096749

To:

Special Secretary/Sr Adviser / Advisers, NITI Aayog

Copy for information to:

1. PS to Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog
2. PS to Member (VKS/RC/VKP), NITI Aayog
3. PSO to CEO, NITI Aayog
4. PS to AS&FA, NITI Aayog
5. PPS to Sr Adviser (G&R)
6. DG, DME0
7. MD, AIM
8. Director (Finance), NITI Aayog
9. Website of [NITI] Aayog



**नीति आयोग**

National Institution for Transforming India

**Research Scheme of NITI Aayog-2021  
(RSNA-2021)  
[as amended]**

**PART A**

**GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH STUDIES  
&  
RESEARCH PAPERS/DESK BASED  
RESEARCH**

**Governance and Research Vertical  
National Institution for Transforming India  
NITI Aayog  
Government of India  
Sansad Marg  
New Delhi 110001**

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## **Research Scheme of NITI Aayog (RSNA), 2021 Guidelines for Operationalization of the Scheme**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. In order to evolve a shared vision of national development priorities, sectors and strategies with the active involvement of States in the light of national objectives, Government of India has replaced Planning Commission by the NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) which has commenced operations w.e.f. January 1, 2015. As a dedicated Think Tank of the Government, NITI Aayog is expected to carry out this 'directional' role, strategically charting the future of the nation. It is expected to provide specialised inputs - strategic, functional and technical - to the Prime Minister and the Government (Centre as well as States), on matters critical to the fulfilment of the national development agenda. Besides, it is envisaged that NITI Aayog will play an important role in monitoring the implementation of policies and programmes, and evaluate their impact. Over a period of time it would develop as a Knowledge and Innovation hub – and accumulator as well as disseminator of research and best practices on good governance, through a state-of-the-art Resource Centre which identifies, analyses, shares and facilitates replication of the same. The Aayog is expected to provide advice and encourage partnerships between key stakeholders and national and international like-minded Think Tanks, as well as educational and policy research institutions. One of the strategies to achieve these objectives is to put in place a mechanism for getting quality research work done through outside professional/expert agencies and individual experts besides supporting for exchange of views and fostering new ideas. This would be in addition to the in house and outsourced research done by the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Organisation (DMEO), which is a part of the NITI Aayog.
- 1.2. NITI Aayog has also launched a major initiative viz. SAMAVESH aimed at networking and partnership with knowledge and research institutions using a hub and spoke model. Under Samavesh, NITI has entered into MoUs with various reputed institutes/ think tanks across different sectors. SAMAVESH is expected to help NITI evolve as an apex think tank of the Government while the partner institutions can be developed as Centres of Excellence for specific thematic priorities and can further reach out and mentor similar institutions that would together help create a knowledge ecosphere in the country. Besides, NITI Aayog also enters into Statements of Intent with other Think Tanks/ Academic Institutions.

### **2. RESEARCH SCHEME OF NITI AAYOG, 2021**

- 2.1 The 'Research Scheme of NITI Aayog, 2021' (hereinafter referred to as Scheme or RSNA) would aim at supporting various research studies (by on-line public notices/ advertisements or invitation through empanelment or nomination) as per the objectives of the NITI Aayog. In addition, seminars/ conferences/ workshops etc. organized by the reputed organizations can also be supported under the Scheme. Besides, various organisations can also be extended non-financial support under this scheme by permitting them to use NITI Aayog Logo for the events such as seminars/ conferences/ workshops/summits/ symposium/ exhibitions/annual functions.

- 2.2 The Scheme shall be implemented by the Governance and Research Vertical in the NITI Aayog in partnership with the Subject Verticals/Division (SV/D) of NITI Aayog in respective subject matters. Under this Scheme, consultation fee or admissible assistance would be provided, for carrying out the aforesaid activities on topics/subjects of interest to NITI Aayog as decided by the Competent Authority.
- 2.3 These guidelines supersede the guidelines of the Research Scheme of NITI Aayog 2018. However, the existing studies sanctioned as per RSNA 2018 would continue to be governed by those guidelines till their completion.
- 2.4 The Scheme shall be operated through three sets of guidelines – Part ‘A’ is for supporting research studies/ white papers, Part ‘B’ for providing Grants-in-aid for seminars/ conferences/ workshops, etc., and Part ‘C’ for non-financial support in form of using NITI Aayog Logo for events indicated in Para 2.1.
- 2.5 This set of guidelines cover Part ‘A’ that covers funding support for extramural research got conducted by NITI Aayog upon payment of consultation fee.

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME FOR EXTRAMURAL RESEARCH:**

- 3.1 The objective of the Scheme is to stimulate and encourage research and studies deemed necessary for achievement of the country’s developmental objectives. The Scheme will work in alignment with the objectives of NITI Aayog as indicated in the Cabinet Resolution dated January 1, 2015 for setting up of NITI Aayog, which are reproduced below:-
  - (i) To evolve a shared vision of national development priorities, sectors and strategies with the active involvement of States in the light of national objectives.
  - (ii) To foster cooperative federalism through structured support initiatives and mechanisms with the States on a continuous basis, recognizing that strong States make a strong nation.
  - (iii) To develop mechanisms to formulate credible plans at the village level and aggregate these progressively at higher levels of government.
  - (iv) To ensure, on areas that are specifically referred to it, that the interests of national security are incorporated in economic strategy and policy.
  - (v) To pay special attention to the sections of our society that may be at risk of not benefitting adequately from economic progress.
  - (vi) To design strategic and long term policy and programme frameworks and initiatives, and monitor their progress and their efficacy. The lessons learnt through monitoring and feedback will be used for making innovative improvements, including necessary mid-course corrections.
  - (vii) To provide advice and encourage partnerships between key stakeholders and national and international like-minded Think Tanks, as well as educational and policy research institutions.
  - (viii) To create a knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurial support system through a collaborative community of national and international experts, practitioners and other partners.
  - (ix) To offer a platform for resolution of inter-sectoral and inter-departmental issues in order to accelerate the implementation of the development agenda.
  - (x) To maintain a state-of-the-art Resource Centre, be a repository of research on good

governance and best practices in sustainable and equitable development as well as help their dissemination to stake-holders.

- (xi) To actively monitor and evaluate the implementation of programmes and initiatives, including the identification of the needed resources so as to strengthen the probability of success and scope of delivery.
  - (xii) To focus on technology up-gradation and capacity building for implementation of programmes and initiatives.
  - (xiii) To undertake other activities as may be necessary in order to further the execution of the national development agenda, and the objectives mentioned above.
- 3.2 The funding will be subject to ensuring that only quality research works are taken up under this Scheme and they enrich the knowledge-base in the relevant fields and directions considered important by the Government/ NITI Aayog. The NITI Aayog would fund the research studies/ projects as per its objectives on specified subjects/ topics while operationalizing the Scheme.
- 3.3 NITI Aayog has created a Knowledge Digital Hub/Portal, which is a dynamic platform for information sharing, exchange of ideas/ values and learning the innovative best practices across various sectors. This digital platform can be used to build leadership talent, motivate and improve knowledge base on key governance issues for learning and development. This portal with inputs from the Central and State/UTs Governments would also be extended to provide training, mentoring, on-boarding and enabling government employees to be more productive thereby (i) improving quality at work; (ii) reducing risks by sharing knowledge on critical issues; (iii) making right knowledge available to right person at right place and at right time; and (iv) reducing time and effort required for knowledge transfer during employee transfer/ superannuation across regions. It will combine with digital contents of user's real-time data to personalize and contextualize experience, integrate with social channels and lay a digital foundation for best practices. However, before uploading any successful case study sent by District Magistrates, etc., it is proposed to get the case studies validated by a third party using the resources of the Research Scheme, as set out in these guidelines.

#### **4. MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE SCHEME:**

The admissible component/activities under the scheme shall include hiring of Professional Services for:

- a) Carrying out Research Studies
- b) Writing white papers on specific subjects (say >10,000 words) within a short period of time (upto 3 months)
- c) Carrying out a comprehensive desk-based research (i.e. without field survey) on specific subjects.
- d) Providing inputs to NITI Aayog on specific thematic area or organizing training/ sensitization programmes, etc. within the broad framework of the scheme objective.
- e) Reviewing of any case studies/validating best practices as per the NITI's requirement for the purposes of the knowledge portal.

#### **5. ELIGIBILITY OF CONSULTANTS FOR RESEARCH STUDIES**

##### **5.1 Guidelines for Institutions/ Organisations**

The following institutions/ organisations shall be eligible for funding under the scheme:-

- a) All the organisations having a distinct legal status in India whether in public or private sector are eligible under the scheme. However, Non-Governmental Organisations must necessarily be registered at the NGO-Darpan Portal of NITI Aayog.
- b) “SAMAVESH” Institutions which have entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NITI Aayog to undertake various activities as per the MoU.
- c) Other Organisations/ Institutions with whom NITI Aayog has signed Statements of Intent.
- d) Chair Professor Units which have been provided Funding by the erstwhile Planning Commission.
- e) 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 a joint collaboration, all members of the collaboration shall agree to the terms and conditions of the Letter of Approval 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.
- f) Any institution, which has been black-listed or debarred (the list is to be provided by the SV/D) from receiving any grant from the Government for any specific period, will not be considered for funding under the Scheme. During the process of implementation of the Scheme, in case of any breach of the terms and conditions as laid down in the Letter of Approval (LoA) coming to notice, the organization/individuals may be black listed from receiving any assistance under the RSNA for a period of five years from the date of approval of the Competent Authority on such a decision of debarment. The Competent Authority shall be CEO, NITI Aayog for this purpose and can be done based on the recommendation of the Research Evaluation Committee (REC). The appeal against such blacklisting or debarment shall be made to Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog.

## 5.2 Guidelines for Individuals

To be eligible for funding under the scheme, an individual should be:-

- a) An Indian national with reputation of expertise in the relevant subject
- b) At least 5 research paper, journal article must be published in reputed Indian/foreign journal as single or first author.
- c) The research work has not been submitted to any other agency/agencies for financial support

## 6. TYPES OF RESEARCH STUDIES/WHITE PAPERS/DESK BASED RESEARCH AND MODUS OPERANDI OF FUNDING

### A FOR INSTITUTIONS/ORGANISATIONS

- 6.1 There are primarily two types of research studies – solicited and unsolicited. Solicited research studies shall be those where NITI Aayog reaches out to consultancy organisations including Samavesh Partners/Chair Professor Units/Other Organisations with whom NITI has signed SoI and experts for undertaking specific assignment for NITI Aayog through bidding, empanelment or on nomination basis. The unsolicited proposals shall be those

where consulting organisations approach NITI Aayog with specific proposal for research studies. In case of both solicited and unsolicited proposals, concerned SV/D shall examine the proposal on merits and seek in-principle approval of Member concerned before forwarding the same to Governance and Research Vertical for processing. If deemed necessary, the consulting organisation/Principal Investigator (PI) shall be invited to make a presentation before the senior officials in NITI Aayog detailing the study.

- 6.2 The funding of the research studies shall be carried out broadly under three categories:
- (i) consultancy through advertisement/bidding, (ii) consultancy by empanelment and (iii) consultancy by nomination (solicited and unsolicited). In case of open market consultancy or bidding, the research topic shall be advertised on the official website of NITI Aayog or Central Public Procurement website for getting expression of interest (EoI) where after two stage bidding process shall be followed while the weightages of Technical and Financial Bid would be 70:30. In case of empanelment, specific institutions/organisations shall be identified by the concerned SV/D based on a pre-qualification criteria who would be asked to give financial bid directly. The consultancy by nomination category would involve direct funding of an identified organization which is considered most suitable by NITI to conduct that type of research.
- 6.3 The funding under this component shall be predominantly in form of consultancy fee for hiring of professional services in the form of research studies. However, this may also include writing specialized papers or funding of a training/sensitisation programme, etc. keeping in view the emerging requirements of NITI Aayog.
- 6.4 **Terms of Reference (ToR):** The ToR of Research study shall contain (i) Title, Background and Objective of the study, (ii) Research methodology (iii) study area, (iv) outline of the tasks and final output expected from the consultants, (v) methods of review, schedule for submitting the 1st draft report and project completion report, (vi) budget, duration and schedule for completion of the assignment (vii) any support or inputs to be provided to the consultant.

## **B FOR INDIVIDUALS**

- 6.5 There are primarily two types of research work outsourced to individuals – (i) writing white papers on specific subjects (say > 10,000 words); and (ii) doing a comprehensive desk-based research (i.e. without field survey) on specific subjects.
- 6.6 In case of both white paper and desk-based research, concerned SV/D shall identify subject and individual expert to carry out research work and seek approval of Member concerned before forwarding the same to Governance and Research Vertical for processing. The selection of the subject, where adequate justification is available for single source selection of individual expert as per Rule 194 of GFR 2017 shall be kept in view by the SV/D.
- 6.7 The funding under this component shall be in form of fee for writing specialized papers/research work keeping in view the emerging requirements of NITI Aayog.
- 6.8 **Terms of Reference (ToR):** The ToR of Research work shall contain (i) Title, Background and Objective of the research (ii) Research area, (iii) outline of the tasks and final output expected from the consultant, (iv) schedule for submitting the 1st draft of the paper, peer review of draft papers (v) budget, duration and schedule for completion of the assignment.



- 6.9 There shall be a ceiling of writing of 3 white paper and 3 studies per individual researcher per financial year. The limit can be relaxed in extremely deserving cases with the approval of Vice Chairman.

## 7. OPERATIONALISATION OF THE SCHEME

### A RESEARCH STUDIES

- 7.1 The Governance and Research Vertical of NITI Aayog shall be the nodal Secretariat for the operationalisation of the Scheme and body for all administrative aspects.
- 7.2 The Scheme shall operate in close coordination with the concerned SV/D of NITI Aayog who shall be responsible for finalizing technical aspects of the study. This includes Terms of Reference of the study, recommending the proposal, helping REC for evaluating the technical bids, monitoring of qualitative aspects of the study, presenting the proposal before the competent authority, evaluation of findings and finalization/ acceptance of the report, implementation thereof, etc.
- 7.3 **Priority Studies:** The study proposals based on specific recommendations on topics/ subjects as received from Prime Minister's Office or Vice Chairman or Members of NITI Aayog shall be considered as Priority Studies for approval and due sanction, subject to fulfillment of other terms and conditions as laid down under the guidelines.
- 7.4 Samavesh Partners, Chair Professor Units and other Institutions with whom NITI Aayog has signed SoIs may be accorded priority while considering proposals for funding under the scheme.
- 7.5 **Research Evaluation Committee for Consultancy by Nomination (RECCN):** There shall be a RECCN which shall comprise of Vice Chairman (VCH) of NITI Aayog as Chairperson with members of the Committee shall be (i) at least two members of NITI Aayog, of which one Member should be looking after the particular subject matter, (ii) CEO (iii) Additional Secretary (KIH), (iv) Adviser of the concerned SV/D and (v) Adviser (G&R). The Quorum of RECCN meetings shall be 4 members and the meeting must be chaired by the VCH.
- 7.6 If deemed necessary, the Adviser of the concerned SV/D or the proposed consultant may be requested to make a short presentation during deliberations of RECCN. The final authority for sanction of proposals for nomination category (both solicited and unsolicited) is the RECCN. Since Members of RECCN are also present in the Senior Management Committee (SMC), the proposals may also be taken up for consideration in SMC/ SOM.
- 7.7 **Research Evaluation Committee (REC):** There shall be a standing REC to open and evaluate the technical and financial bids submitted by the short listed institutions/organizations in response to the RfP in case of consultancy through Advertisement, and Financial bids in case of consultancy by empanelment. The Research Evaluation Committee (REC) shall be chaired by Sr Adviser (Governance & Research) with other Members being Adviser of the concerned subject vertical and Director(Finance), IFD. The decision of REC shall be binding on all the parties of the research studies w.r.t. consulting by empanelment and consultancy through Advertisement categories. The Governance & Research Vertical shall provide the secretariat assistance to the REC.
- 7.8 The composition of REC for the purposes of evaluation of best practices for the knowledge portal shall comprise Additional Secretary (KIH) as chairman, Adviser/ Sr. Consultant (in

charge of knowledge portal) and Adviser (Governance & Research) as members.

- 7.9 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 (₹).
- 7.10 **Release of Funds:** This will be made online through Public Financial Management System (PFMS) and through RTGS/ECS/NEFT. The Tax (TDS) will be deducted by the DDO, NITI Aayog before releasing the amount as per the Income Tax Rules as amended from time to time. If any amount has to be released to NGO, then the concerned NGO is required to have the unique ID through the NGO-Darpan Portal of NITI Aayog.
- 7.11 **Financial Ceiling:** There shall be no financial limit for studies under consultancy by Bidding. The financial limit for studies under the empanelment category shall be ₹ 50 lakhs and for consultancy by Nomination categories, the financial limit shall be ₹ 25 lakhs as per rule 183 of GFR 2017. The Research Evaluation Committee for Consultancy by Nomination (RECCN) may relax the financial ceiling in exceptional cases depending upon the specific requirements of some studies under Nomination category or any research work/ study under Samavesh initiative. The financial ceiling for Third Party validating Best Practices or any other as mentioned in para 4 (c) shall be ₹ 60,000 including taxes. It is clarified that the budget ceiling and sanctioned amount shall include all taxes or GST, if any applicable.
- 7.12 **Consultancy by Nomination:** This category would involve direct funding of an identified organization/consultants which is considered most suitable by NITI to conduct that type of research. The proposals can be solicited and unsolicited. The selection of studies under Consultancy by nomination, where adequate justification is available for single-source selection as per Rule 194 of GFR, 2017 under exceptional circumstances, could be considered for cases such as (i) tasks that represent a natural continuation of previous work carried out by the firm, (ii) in case of emergency situation, situation arising after natural disasters, situations where timely completion of the assignment is of utmost importance, (iii) situations where the execution of assignment may involve use of proprietary techniques or only one consultant has requisite expertise to conduct the study in a timely manner and (iv) Situation in which NITI Aayog feels that the organisation is most suitable for conduct of study as per the objectives of NITI Aayog. Full justification for single source selection should be recorded in the file by the concerned SV/D and approval of the competent authority (RECCN) shall be obtained before resorting to such single-source selection. The following aspects may also be kept in view for cases of consultancy by nomination:-
- a) The competent authority for sanctioning of such studies shall be the Research Evaluation Committee for Consultancy by Nomination (RECCN). The decision of RECCN is final and binding.
  - b) The RECCN shall ensure fairness and equity, and shall have a procedure in place to ensure that the prices are reasonable and consistent with market rates for tasks of a similar nature; and the required consultancy services are not split into smaller sized procurement.
  - c) The list of Institutions which shall generally be considered for consultancy by nomination shall include all IITs, IIMs, Central Universities, AIIMS, National Law Universities, reputed Autonomous Bodies under Central or State Governments, besides Samavesh Partners and Chair Professor Units of NITI Aayog. Any other reputed

consultancy organisation in the public or private sector may also be considered by RECCN for grant of consultancy by nomination keeping in view the competence of the consulting organisation in undertaking such study.

- d) In a given financial year, not more than 40% of the funds shall be earmarked for studies awarded on nomination basis. However, in exceptional cases where circumstances warrant, the limit may be relaxed with the approval of the RECCN with the reasons recorded in writing.

## **PROCEDURE OF APPLICATION FOR CONSULTANCY BY NOMINATION**

### **A. Solicited Proposals for Consultancy by Nomination**

- i) The concerned SV/D or G&R Vertical will approach the consultancy organisation with a Request Letter containing the Terms of Reference (ToR).
- ii) Once communication has been made the Institute will have to submit the technical proposal (Annexure-2) and Financial Proposal (Annexure-3) of the Study, and required documents (para 10 ii & iii) & Undertaking (para 10 iv).
- iii) The concerned SV/D shall make a presentation before RECCN of NITI Aayog. The RECCN shall examine the proposal and after its recommendation (upon receipt of minutes of the meeting), the file shall be processed as per the procedure given in subsequent paras.

### **B. Unsolicited Proposals for Consultancy by Nomination**

- i) The consulting organisation will have to submit the Research Study's Technical Proposal (Annexure-2) and Financial Proposal (Annexure-3) along with forward letter (Annexure-4), and required documents & Undertaking (as per para 10).
- ii) The views of the concerned SV/D shall be taken on the Technical proposal. If deemed necessary, concerned SV/D may hold further discussions with the consultant and suitably modify the proposal in line with the NITI's requirements.
- iii) The concerned SV/D shall make a presentation before RECCN of NITI Aayog. The RECCN shall examine the proposal and after its recommendation (upon receipt of minutes of the meeting), the file shall be processed as per the procedure given in subsequent paras.

- 7.13 **Consultancy by Empanelment:** This would include identifying specific organisations/ institutions based on a pre-qualification criteria which would lead to preparation of a long list of potential consultants/panel of institutions who shall be issued RfP with Terms of Reference (ToR) (refer para 6.4). The formation of such a list/panel would be initiated by concerned SV/D which may, inter alia, take into account the past track record of the organisations/ institutions, expertise in the respective sector, informal/ formal inquiries from Ministries/ Departments/ Chambers of commerce, etc. The SV/D shall communicate at least 3 (three) shortlisted organisations with PIs for a particular study to the Governance & Research Vertical. In these cases, technical bids would not be required and study shall be awarded by REC on the basis of lowest financial bid (L1) only as per the procedure in subsequent paras.

## **PROCEDURE OF APPLICATION FOR CONSULTANCY BY EMPANELMENT**

- (a) The concerned SV/D will provide the title and the detailed ToR of the study, and the list of minimum 3 (Three) shortlisted organisations to G&R Vertical which will approach the Institutes with a Request for Proposal (RfP) containing only the ToR.
- (b) Once communication has been made, the Institutes will have to submit the Financial Proposal (Annexure-3) of the Research Study along with required documents and Undertaking as per Para 10.
- (c) The REC shall open and examine the financial bids, and may recommend the study to the lowest (L1) bidder as per Rule 193 of GFR 2017 (i.e. the responsive technically qualified proposal with lowest evaluated cost). The bidders shall be invited to be present at the date/ time of such opening of bids.
- (d) After an Institute has been selected for the Study by REC, the file shall be processed as per the procedure given in subsequent paras.

7.14 **Consultancy through Advertisement:** In this case of open market consultancy, the research topic shall be advertised on the official website of NITI Aayog or Central Public Procurement (CPP) website for getting expression of interest (EoI). In such cases a two stage bidding process shall be followed where the weightages of Technical and Financial Bid would be 70:30. Here the interested researcher would submit the Expression of Interest (EoI) within specified time (generally 3 weeks) with documents as per the format given in Annexure-1.

### **(I) PROCEDURE FOR CONSULTANCY THROUGH ADVERTISEMENT**

**Stage-I:** (i) The SV/D of the NITI Aayog shall give the names for Research Studies with ToR to the Governance and Research Vertical at any time in a year with the approval of Member concerned and Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog ; (ii) The topic(s) would be advertised vide public notice on Central Public Procurement Portal (CPPP) at [www.eprocure.gov.in](http://www.eprocure.gov.in) and on NITI Aayog website. (iii) The interested Principal Investigator (PI) affiliated Organisations/Institution would submit the EoI along with the required documents (Annexure-1); (iv) Short-listing of Eligible Institutions/Organisations: Efforts would be made not to short-list too many eligible institutions/organizations for a particular assignment. In case, names of too many institutions/organizations are available for a particular assignment, generally less than 10 organizations would be short-listed on the basis of (a) their past performance/ association with the erstwhile Planning Commission/NITI Aayog, (b) their research work/performance in the relevant field. This short-listing would be initiated by the G&R Vertical and shall be given to the concerned SV/D for due vetting by Head of SV/D.

**Stage-II:** (i) The Request for Proposal (RfP) will be issued with Letter of Invitation (LoI) to the shortlisted organisations to seek their technical and financial proposals/bids. (ii) The bidders shall submit the study proposals (both technical bid and financial bid as given Annexures 2 and 3) along with Forwarding Letter of Proposal (Annexure-4) in separate sealed envelopes as per the provisions of Rule 187 of GFR, 2017 and its subsequent amendments, and in pursuance of these Guidelines. (iii) No responsibility shall be taken for postal delay or non-delivery/non-receipt by the Governance & Research Vertical. Bid sent by Fax or e-mail will not be considered and liable to be rejected. **Late bids**, i.e., the bids received after the specified date and time of receipt shall not be considered. (iv) The

proposals/bids, sealed in an outer big envelope containing cover letter, technical proposal and financial proposal in separate sealed envelopes therein, with the expression ‘DO NOT OPEN BEFORE the [Date] superscribed on top of the envelope, should reach the specified address on or before a pre-decided Date and Time.

**(II) Evaluation of Technical Bids:**

The technical bids will be evaluated by the REC. At the end of the technical evaluation process, the REC shall prepare a technical evaluation report in detail of the quality of the proposals. The evaluation report shall contain in detail the reasons for acceptance or rejection of the technical proposals analysed and evaluated by it. The REC shall follow Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method (Rule 192, GFR 2017) for evaluating the technical bids. The minimum qualifying mark for technical bids shall be 50. The names of successful technically qualified bidders, who have satisfied the minimum qualifying marks, shall be notified on the NITI Aayog website. After evaluation of the technical bids, the financial proposals of the bidders/consultants whose proposals do not meet the minimum qualifying marks or were considered non-responsive to the RfP, will be discarded. The Criteria for Evaluation of Technical proposal (details are given in Annexure 2) is as under:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Technical Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Max Marks</b>	<b>Score by REC</b>
1	Profile of key personnel and their suitability for assignment in the research study.	<b>25</b>	
2	Experience of the organisation in conducting research Projects/Reports in the areas of this subject/theme for Reputed institutes and publications in last 10 years.	<b>20</b>	
3	Relevance and need of the study to the NITI Aayog and capability of knowledge transfer.	<b>20</b>	
4	Chapterisation, contents and lay out of the proposed report.	<b>05</b>	
5	Methodology & sample Design, Work Plan/Execution Strategy, and use of statistical design & tools.	<b>30</b> <b>(10 each)</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	

**(III) Evaluation of Financial Bids:**

- (a) The financial proposals/bids of these technically qualified bidders shall be opened by REC within 7 working days of notification on the NITI Aayog website. The bidders are welcome to be present during this process.
- (b) The name of the consultant, the technical scores (if any), and the indicated prices (in ₹) shall be read aloud and recorded when the financial proposals are opened.
- (c) 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.

- (d) For the purpose of evaluation, the total cost shall include all the taxes as applicable.
- (e) If there are conditions attached to any financial proposal, which shall have bearing on the total costs as indicated in the proposal, the REC shall reject any such proposals as non-responsive financial proposal.

**(IV) Selection of Winning Consultant**

The selection will be as per QCBS method. A final combined score (H) shall be made thereby allotting 70% weightage to technical score and 30% weightage to financial score. 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.

**7.15 ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL APPROVAL PROCESS OF THE RESEARCH STUDIES**

- a) All the proposals along with recommendation of REC/RECCN shall be submitted to Financial Adviser (FA) of NITI Aayog for financial concurrence of the whole amount and release of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> installment of the study/research in the current/subsequent financial years.
- b) After getting the financial concurrence, the proposals shall then be sent to the CEO, NITI Aayog for final administrative approval. Thereafter, the Governance & Research Vertical will issue a Letter of Approval (LoA) with detailed terms and conditions and also sanction order for release of Consultancy fee.
- c) The Head of the organisation or his authorized nominee should then issue a Bond (Annexure-5) to NITI Aayog within 15 days of the dispatch of the LoA. Once NITI Aayog receives this, the Study will commence with release of 1<sup>st</sup> installment.
- d) The sanction orders will be issued for all the installments and the Sanctioned amount shall be released as per the table below.

<b>Installment</b>	<b>% of release</b>	<b>Stage</b>
<b>1st</b>	<b>40</b>	At the time of sanction, the bidding organisation has to submit, the acceptance of Terms and Conditions of LoA and Bond. The organisation should submit a Bond on 10 rupees Non-Judicial Stamp paper, duly executed by Head of the Organisation or his authorized representative, authenticated on each page. However, no bond is required from the Govt. owned institutions or autonomous Bodies or Samavesh Partners. (Specimen of bond is given in Annexure – 5)

<b>2nd</b>	<b>30</b>	After submission of 1st Draft Report. The report may generally cover (i) literature survey, (ii) chapterisation, (iii) objectives of the study, (iv) data collection and compilation method, (v) Methodology/statistical methods or tools for analysis of data or use of any software of the work done (vi) Findings of the study/ recommendations, and (vii) Disclaimer and Acknowledgement. The report will be given to the SV/D whose suggestion will be incorporated in the final draft report. The final authority for releasing the 2nd instalment will be Adviser (G&R) upon concurrence of Adviser of concerned SV/D.
<b>3rd</b>	<b>30</b>	After acceptance of Project Completion report having Disclaimer and Acknowledgement with (i) incorporating all the suggestions given by NITI Aayog (and the Administrative Ministry, if consulted, before final printing of the report); (ii) receiving of (a) Requisite copies of Project Completion (to be given in LoA)/ Final Report of the study [Printed on both sides and in a book binding form (no hard binding) in A4 size bond paper/ Dó paper], (b) Pen drive containing complete final report in pdf form, and (c) Utilization of Funds & Statement of Expenditure of total amount spent on the study as per Annexure-6. If there is any shortcoming in the Project Completion/ Final report, then the 3rd installment would be withheld till such time the observations are addressed properly by the consultant.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	Closing the Study

*Note: The soft copy of draft reports may also be sent via email (to be mentioned in LoA)*

- 7.16 No utilization certificate would be required for releasing the installments. Only the Utilization of Funds & statement of expenditure (Annexure-6) would be submitted along with the project completion report at the end for releasing the final installment. If there are any unutilized funds, then it shall be refunded to NITI Aayog by bank drafts payable to Pay and Accounts Office, NITI Aayog. The details of the same would be communicated to the organisation in the Notice Demand letter or LoA as per provisions in Bond.

## **B WHITE PAPERS/DESK BASED RESEARCH BY INDIVIDUALS**

- 7.17 The Governance and Research Vertical of NITI Aayog shall be the nodal Secretariat for operationalisation of the Scheme.
- 7.18 The Scheme shall operate in close coordination with the concerned SV/D of NITI Aayog who shall be responsible for finalizing the subject, recommending the individuals expert, monitoring of qualitative aspects of the subject area, peer review of research work, acceptance of research work, implementation thereof etc.
- 7.19 **Procedure of Application for Consultancy by Individual**
- i. The concerned SV/D or G&R Vertical will approach the consultant with a Request Letter

containing the Terms of Reference (ToR).

- ii. Once communication has been made the Individual will have to submit the technical proposal & Financial Proposal (Annexure-7) of the Study, and required documents (para 10 iii) & Undertaking (para 10 iv).
- iii. The concerned SV/D shall seek approval of Member concerned and forward the proposal to Governance and Research Vertical, the file shall be processed as per the procedure given in subsequent paras.

7.20 The 'financial support' shall include fee to the experts presenting the papers/ research work

7.21 **Financial Ceiling** : There shall be a financial limit of ₹ 2 lakhs for presenting white paper and ₹ 5 lakhs for desk-based research. It is clarified that the budget ceiling and sanctioned amount shall include all taxes or GST, if any applicable.

7.22 **Release of Funds**: This will be made online through Public Financial Management System (PFMS) and through RTGS/ECS/NEFT. The Tax (TDS) will be deducted by the DDO, NITI Aayog before releasing the amount as per the Income Tax Rules as amended from time to time.

#### 7.23 **ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL APPROVAL PROCESS OF THE RESEARCH WORK BY INDIVIDUALS**

- a) All the proposals along with recommendation of the Member concerned shall be submitted to Financial Adviser (FA) of NITI Aayog for financial concurrence of the whole amount and release of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> installments of the research work in the current/subsequent financial years.
- b) After getting the financial concurrence, the proposals shall then be sent to the CEO, NITI Aayog for final administrative approval. Thereafter, the Governance & Research Vertical will issue a Letter of Approval (LoA) with detailed terms and conditions and also sanction order for release of honorarium.
- c) The individual researcher then submits a Bond (Annexure-9) to NITI Aayog within 15 days of the dispatch of the LoA. Once NITI Aayog receives this, the Study will commence with release of 1st installment.
- d) The specific documents required before releasing the sanction are (i) Photo copy of the PAN card of the individual and (ii) Bank details for releasing the instalments (to be sent with LoA). Necessary TDS shall be deducted as per the extant IT rule. The duration and other details would be mentioned in LoA.
- e) The sanction orders will be issued for all the installments and the Sanctioned amount shall be released as per the table below:

<b>Installment</b>	<b>% of release</b>	<b>Stage</b>
<b>1st</b>	<b>40</b>	At the time of sanction, the individual expert has to submit, the acceptance of Terms and Conditions of LoA and a Bond. The individual should submit a Bond on 10 rupees Non-Judicial Stamp paper, duly executed by the individual on each page. (Specimen of bond is given in Annexure – 9)



<b>2nd</b>	<b>30</b>	After submission of draft paper/study. The research paper/study may generally cover (i) title (ii) chapterisation (iii) objective of the paper/study (iv) Analysis and interpretation of data (v) conclusion/recommendations (vi) Disclaimer and Acknowledgement. The research paper/study will be given to the SV/D, whose suggestion will be incorporated in the final paper/study. The final authority for releasing 2nd installment will be Sr Adviser (G&R) upon concurrence of Adviser concerned SV/D.
<b>3rd</b>	<b>30</b>	<p>a. After peer review and acceptance of research work having Disclaimer and Acknowledgement. The research paper/study will be given to the SV/D, who will get the research work peer reviewed from at least two experts in the field.</p> <p>b. Pen drive containing complete final report in pdf form, and</p> <p>c. Utilization of Funds &amp; Statement of Expenditure of total amount spent on the study as per Annexure-8 If there is any shortcoming in the document, then the 3<sup>rd</sup> installment would be withheld till such time the observations are addressed properly by the individual expert.</p>

## **8. FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL PROCESS FOR VALIDATION OF BEST PRACTICES FOR THE KNOWLEDGE PORTAL**

As indicated at para 7.8, the REC is the final authority to sanction the assistance for a particular organisation for validation of best practices from the list of organisations who have signed MoUs with NITI Aayog including organisation under Samavesh initiative or chair professor units. The LoA shall be issued after getting the financial concurrence and administrative approval of CEO, NITI Aayog. The funds shall be released in two instalments- 1<sup>st</sup> installment 70% (initially) and 2<sup>nd</sup> installment 30 % (after getting the report). The specific documents required before releasing the sanction are (i) Photo copy of the PAN card of the organisation, (ii) Registration Number in NGO-Portal “Darpan” of NITI Aayog and its copy, if applicable and (iii) Bank details for releasing the instalments (to be sent with LoA). Necessary TDS shall be deducted as per the extant IT rule. The duration and other details would be mentioned in LoA.

## **9. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 9.1 Adviser/Head of the SV/D, NITI Aayog shall be the ‘Nodal Officer’ for monitoring the technical aspects of the research study/white paper/desk research. Sr Adviser (G&R) shall monitor the administrative aspects of the study and shall seek views/ comments of the Adviser of the concerned SV/D on Draft Report of the study.

- 9.2 The draft report/draft paper/draft research work and Project Completion report shall be accepted only after vetting by the concerned SV/D which should endeavor to submit their comments at the earlier but no later than 60 days from the submission of the report. If SV/D feels that the final draft report/draft paper/draft research work may be discussed with the concerned Administrative Ministries then the SV/D can do so directly with an intimation to the G& R Vertical. The Ministry may be requested to communicate their views within 30 days, otherwise, the report/paper/research work may be deemed to have been accepted by the concerned Ministry and concerned SV/D. A final view, however, shall be taken by Sr Adviser (G&R) in consultation with Adviser of the concerned SV/D. The project completion report shall be submitted by the consulting organisation after confirmation that the report has been accepted by NITI Aayog.
- 9.3 **Extension of Time:** The extension of time for submitting the draft/draft white paper/draft research work/ Project Completion Report may be considered if the organisation/individual provides adequate justification, for factors beyond the control of the organisation/individual in completing the assignment in time. Such permission may be granted by Sr Adviser (G&R) in consultation with Adviser of the concerned SV/Ds depending upon the merits of the case. In such cases, the provision of penal interest would not apply if the reasons for delay are recorded in writing. Any such request on extension must reach the G&R vertical at least 15 days before the completion of the prescribed time period.

#### 9.4 TIME LINE

##### A Time line of the research study

- (i) The research personnel shall be in position to commence research work from the date of issuing of Letter of Approval (LoA) by NITI Aayog. The Date of release of 1<sup>st</sup> installment shall be the starting date of the study.
- (ii) Duration of the study: The exact duration of study would be indicated in the LoA.
- (iii) Submission of 1<sup>st</sup> draft report containing objectives with chapterisation, literature review on the subject, methodology, selection of study area and preliminary findings: Generally, on completion of 4 months from date of release of 1<sup>st</sup> installment (if 12 month is total duration). This may, however, vary from study to study.
- (iv) Submission of final draft report: 1 month before of the total duration of the study.
- (v) Submission of project completion report of the study: Within 2 months after the date of completion of study thereby incorporating the comments of NITI Aayog or administrative Ministry if any, while finalizing the report.

*It is reiterated that the timelines indicated above are tentative and can vary depending upon the requirements of the specific study.*

##### B Time line of the white paper/research work

- (i) The research Expert shall be in position to commence research work from the date of issuing of Letter of Approval (LoA) by NITI Aayog. The Date of release of 1<sup>st</sup> installment shall be the starting date of the research work.
- (ii) Duration of the research work: The exact duration of research work would be indicated in

the LoA.

- (iii) Submission of 1<sup>st</sup> draft report containing objectives with chapterisation, literature review on the subject, methodology, selection of study area and preliminary findings: Generally, on completion of 2 months from date of release of 1<sup>st</sup> installment (if 3 month is total duration). This may, however, vary from research work to work.
- (iv) Submission of final draft research Paper/work: 1 month before of the total duration of the research work.

9.5 **Acknowledgement and Disclaimer in the Draft/draft white paper/draft research work and Project Completion Reports:** The financial support under the Scheme provided by NITI Aayog shall be duly acknowledged on all document produced and prominently displayed with a disclaimer as given below.

- (i) **“ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** This study was carried out with the financial support of NITI Aayog, Government of India, and conducted by [Name of the organisation/individual expert *with address*].” This shall be printed on the cover page of the draft reports/ draft white paper/draft research work or project completion report.
- (ii) **“DISCLAIMER:** *“The Organisation/Individual expert [name to be mentioned] has received the financial assistance under the Research Scheme of NITI Aayog (RSNA) to prepare this report / white paper/research work. While due care has been exercised to prepare the report/ white paper/research work using the data from various sources, NITI Aayog does not confirm the authenticity of data and accuracy of the methodology to prepare the report/ white paper/research work. NITI Aayog shall not be held responsible for findings or opinions expressed in the document. This responsibility completely rests with the Institute/Individual Expert [Name to be mentioned]”.* This shall be printed on the first page inside the Report/ white paper/research work.

If there is any additional specific requirement of NITI Aayog w.r.t. acknowledgement and disclaimer in a particular manner, then the same shall be communicated to the Institute/Individual Expert before the submission of the project completion Report.

## 10. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

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 (wherever applicable):-

- (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/Individual Expert
- (iv) **'Undertaking':** "The [Institute/ Organisation/University (name only)] /I (name of only ) has/have 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".

For validation of best practices, the documentation requirement shall be as per Para 8.

## **11. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- 11.1 All the communications including intimation regarding 1<sup>st</sup> 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. The research 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 for the 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 would apply 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 regarding any 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 same may 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 the NITI 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.

11.23 These guidelines will come into effect from the date of the issue of the circular. Studies which were sanctioned earlier would continue to be governed by the guidelines prevailing at the time of issue of LoA of that study.

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**Format of Expression of Interest (EoI)**

**1. Scope of work and organisation**

- (i) The broad scope of work or service (briefly in about 100 words)
- (ii) Type of Inputs to be provided by NITI Aayog on the subject
- (iii) Eligibility of the consultant(s) for the study

Type of organisation	Address of Organisation	Registration no. as per NGO portal of NITI Aayog	Samavesh Partner/Chair professor unit/ other	Single or Joint or collaboration (Name of all organisations)	Whether blacklisted by Govt of India/ State Govt/any Other department*
*If so, details thereof					

**2. Required 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 (Copy) in NGO-Portal “Darpan” of NITI Aayog, if applicable.
- (iii) Photo copy of PAN card of the organisation.

**3. Undertaking:** "The [Institute/ Organisation/University (name only)] has not obtained or applied for assistance for the same purpose/activity for ..... [Name of study] from any Ministry/Department of Central Government / State Governments. It is solely depending on the assistance of NITI Aayog". [To be given separately on A4 size paper]

**4. Information of PI and Organisation**

Details of Bidder	
1	Name of the Principal Investigator (PI)
2	Address of PI
3	Status of the Organisation (Public Ltd./ Pvt. Ltd./ NGO/ Society/ Trust/ University/ Autonomous Body/ Deemed University)
4	Status as per Registration certificate/ Act
5	Name and Designation of the contact person/ PI and Co-PI to whom all communication shall be made
	Telephone No. (with STD code)
	Mobile Number
	Email of the Contact/ key person
	Fax No. (with STD code)
	Website:

Name and Signature of the Principal Investigator (PI)

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

Official Seal

Date:

Place:

**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 contributions 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**

Study Title	Name of the organisation/ agency (specify whether Central Govt., State Govt., Multilateral organisations, others)	Month/ Year and duration of Study	Amount / Budget (₹ Lakh)	Publications 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 <sup>st</sup> 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:	

Name and Signature of the Principal Investigator (PI)

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

Official Seal

Date:

Place:

**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 (₹)
<b>(a) Data Processing including computation &amp; Computer Work</b>	
<b>(b) Stationery, printing and photocopying</b>	
<b>(c) Overheads/ Institutional Fee</b>	
<b>(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.</b>	

**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 Principal Investigator (PI)

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

Date:

Place:

**Forwarding Letter of the Research Study falling under Consultancy by Advertisement and Nomination (*solicited/unsolicited*)**

**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:

**BOND FORM**

1. Know all persons by these present that we the .....  
.....  
..... (Name of Samiti / Sansthan / Institution / An Association/ researcher) registered under the (Societies / Trust Registration Act (Specify the respective Act)/Companies Act/Affiliated to University) and having its office at \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_ through Shri / Smt./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, duly authorized vide power of attorney / resolution/Order dated of the Samiti / Sansthan/ Institution / An Association/ Trust/University, (hereinafter called the "Obligator") and (I) Sh./Smt./Ms. .... Son/Daughter of Sh. .... Resident of ....., Aadhaar/Voter/ PAN/ ID card No ..... (Attested copy must be enclosed) (II) Sh. .... Son/daughter of Sh. ....

Resident of .....Aadhaar/ Voter/ ID card No..... (Attested copy must be enclosed) (Hereinafter sureties) are held and firmly bound to the President of India here in after called the Government, in the sum of Rs..... (Rupees (in words only).....) together with interest thereon at the rate of 11.50% compounded annually (which would be adjusted as per the Government of India notification issued from time to time) from the date of receipt of the said amount by the Obligator up to the date of refund thereon to the Government. The term, obligator or sureties, unless repugnant to the context, shall mean and include the respective agents, assigns, heirs, successors etc., as the case may be.

2. Signed this ..... day of .....in the year .....

3. Whereas on the Obligator's request the Government has as per NITI Aayog letter No. ....dated and here-in-after referred to as the letter of Approval (which forms an integral part of these presents and copy of this is annexed as Annexure 'A'), agreed to make in favour of the Obligator for the purpose of .....,a fee of Rs. .... (Rupees.....) out of which Rs..... (Rupees... [amount of first installment] ) have already been paid to the Obligator (the receipt) where the obligator do hereby admit and acknowledge two sureties in the terms and conditions manners contained herein after which the obligator and at its request the sureties have agreed to do.

4. Now in consideration of the aforesaid letter of sanction, the obligator herein binds itself and undertakes to comply with the conditions of the Letter of Approval referred to herein and if the obligator shall duly fulfill and comply with all its conditions mentioned in the Letter of Approval mentioning the fee then this bond or obligator's obligation therein shall be void and of no effect, but otherwise it shall remain in full force, effect and virtue, and the Government shall be at liberty to enforce this bond against the obligator or the surety jointly and/or severally, as it may deem fit and on its option. These presents further witness that:

- a. That decision of the CEO, NITI Aayog Govt. of India or the Administrative Head of the NITI Aayog, Govt. of India administratively concerned with the matter, on the question whether there has been breach or violation on the part of the Obligator or any of the terms and conditions mentioned in the letter of approval, shall be final and binding on the Obligator.
- b. The liability of the sureties here under shall not be impaired or discharged by reason of time being granted by the Government or any forbearance, act or omission by or on the part of the Government whether with or without the knowledge or consent of the sureties in respect or in relation to the obligation or conditions to be performed or discharged in the obligation or by reason of the matter or thing whatsoever, which under the law

relating to the sureties shall but for this provision have the effect of so releasing the sureties from such liability, nor shall it be necessary for the Government, to pursue the obligator before using the sureties or either of them the amount due here under.

- c. The **Obligator purein** agrees and undertake to surrender / pay to Government the monetary value of all such pecuniary or other benefits which it may receive or derive / have received or derived through / upon unauthorized use of fee for purpose other than that of which the fee was intended or the assets, purchased largely from out of "Government Grants". The decision of the CEO, NITI Aayog or the administrative head of the NITI Aayog as regards the monetary value of aforementioned to be surrendered /paid to the Government will be final and binding on the Society/Trust/Institution/ Organisation/ Researcher.
- d. The Obligator or the sureties shall, in the event of breach or violation of the terms and conditions mentioned in the Letter of Approval, refund to the Government on demand and without demur the entire amount of Rs. .... (Rupees.....) or such part thereof as may be mentioned in the **Notice Demand** issued by the Government along with the interest thereon at the rate of 11.50% compounded annually (which would be adjusted as per the Government of India notification issued from time to time) from the date of receipt of the said amount by the Obligator up to the date of refund thereof to the Government.
- e. The obligator and the surety assure and confirm that they have understood the scheme of assistance of sanction mentioned therein and they have executed this bond voluntarily and out of their free will.
- f. The Government of India has agreed to bear the stamp duty, if any, chargeable on these presents.

5. In witness thereof these presents have been executed on behalf of the Obligator and the Sureties the day and year here in above written and accepted for (Name and Designation) on the day and year appearing against his signature.

**Signed for and on behalf of the Institution with date (Stamp/Seal)**  
(Name and Designation..... )

**1. Signature of the Surety** (Name and Designation of Surety with Identity Card such as Aadhaar/ Voter/ PAN/ ID card No (attach copy) ..... )

**2. In the presence of:**

(i).....  
(Name & Address of witness) (Signature)  
Aadhaar/ Voter/ PAN/ ID card No (attach copy).....

(ii).....  
(Name & Address of witness) (Signature)  
Aadhaar/ Voter/ PAN/ ID card No (attach copy).....

**3. Accepted for and on behalf of the President of India by.**

### Utilization of Funds and Statement of Expenditure

#### Consultancy Fee

SI No.	Items	No. of persons	Budget allocated (₹)	Actual spent (₹)
1	Principal Investigator (PI) (only one)			
2	Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) (one or two)			
3.	Research Staff:			
4.	Field Staff:			
Total				

#### Domestic Travel and DA

SI No.	Items	No. of persons	Budget allocated (₹)	Actual spent (₹)
1	Principal Investigator (PI) (only one)			
2	Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) (one or two)			
3.	Research Staff:			
4.	Field Staff:			
Total				

#### Other Miscellaneous Expenses

SI No.	Items	No. of persons	Budget allocated (₹)	Actual spent (₹)
1	Data Processing Computer Work			
2	Stationery, printing and photocopying			
3	Overheads: (i), (ii), (iii), etc			
4	Contingency (3% of the proposed Budget)			
5	Any other			
6	Holding Workshop, etc:			
Total				

Total Rs..... (.....in words) has been spent/utilized for the Study “.....”

Name and Signature of the  
Principal Investigator (PI) (with Seal)

Date:

Place

Name and Signature of the Head of the  
Institution/Registrar (if University)/Principal  
(if college) (Official Seal)

Date:

Place:

**Format for Technical Proposal for Research Paper/work**  
(Individual Researcher)

**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 research work is based
4. Selection of study area (if any)
5. Methodology (including sample design)
6. Chapterisation, contents and lay out of the proposed research work

**B Amount of Honorarium: ₹**

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

Study Title	Name of the organisation/ agency (specify whether central Govt., State Govt., Multilateral organisations, others)	Month/ Year and duration of Study	Amount / Budget (₹. Lakh)	Publications in any Journals (Name & Address with impact factor)

**D Required Documents:**

- (i) Photo copy of PAN card of the Expert.

**E Undertaking:** "I [Expert (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".

**F Information of the Expert**

Details of Expert	
1	Name of the Expert
2	Address
	Telephone No. (with STD code)
	Mobile Number
	Email

Name and Signature of the Expert

Date:

Place:

**Utilization of Funds and Statement of Expenditure**  
(Individual Researcher)

**Fee**

Budget allocated (₹)	Actual spent (₹)

Total ₹..... (.....in words) has been spent/utilized for the presenting the papers/research work, titled “.....”

Name and Signature of the Individual Researcher

Date:  
Place:



**BOND FORM**  
(Individual Researcher)

Know all persons by these present that I the.....  
.....(Name of researcher) and having his office/residence at the State of \_\_\_\_\_(hereinafter called the "Obligator") and (I) Sh./Smt./Ms. ....  
Son/Daughter of Sh. Resident of ....., Aadhaar/Voter/ PAN/ ID card No ..... (Attested copy must be enclosed) (II) Sh. ....  
Son/daughter of Sh. ....Resident of .....Aadhaar/ Voter/ ID card No (Attested copy must be enclosed) (Hereinafter sureties) are held and firmly bound to the President of India here in after called the Government, in the sum of ₹..... (Rupees (in words only) ) together with interest thereon at the rate of 11.50% compounded annually (which would be adjusted as per the Government of India notification issued from time to time) from the date of receipt of the said amount by the Obligator up to the date of refund thereon to the Government. The term, obligator or sureties, unless repugnant to the context, shall mean and include the respective agents, assigns, heirs, successors etc., as the case may be.

2 Signed this ..... day of .....in the year .....

3 Whereas on the Obligator’s request the Government has as per NITI Aayog letter No. ....dated.....and here-in-after referred to as the letter of Approval (which forms an integral part of these presents and copy of this is annexed as Annexure ‘A’), agreed to make in favour of the Obligator for the purpose of .....,a fee of ₹. .... (Rupees.....) out of which ₹..... (Rupees... [amount of first installment] ) have been paid in advance to the Obligator (the receipt) where the obligator do hereby admit and acknowledge two sureties in the terms and conditions manners contained herein after which the obligator and at its request the sureties have agreed to do.

4 Now in consideration of the aforesaid letter of sanction, the obligator herein binds itself and undertakes to comply with the conditions of the Letter of Approval referred to herein and if the obligator shall duly fulfill and comply with all its conditions mentioned in the Letter of Approval mentioning the fee then this bond or obligator’s obligation therein shall be void and of no effect, but otherwise it shall remain in full force, effect and virtue, and the Government shall be at liberty to enforce this bond against the obligator or the surety jointly and/or severally, as it may deem fit and on its option. These presents further witness that:

- a. That decision of the CEO, NITI Aayog Govt. of India or the Administrative Head of the NITI Aayog, Govt. of India administratively concerned with the matter, on the question whether there has been breach or violation on the part of the Obligator or any of the terms and conditions mentioned in the letter of approval, shall be final and binding on the Obligator.
- b. The liability of the sureties here under shall not be impaired or discharged by reason of time being granted by the Government or any forbearance, act or omission by or on the part of the Government whether with or without the knowledge or consent of the sureties in respect or in relation to the obligation or conditions to be performed or discharged in the obligation or by reason of the matter or thing whatsoever, which under the law relating to the sureties shall but

for this provision have the effect of so releasing the sureties from such liability, nor shall it be necessary for the Government, to pursue the obligator before using the sureties or either of them the amount due here under.

- c. The **Obligator purein** agrees and undertake to surrender / pay to Government the monetary value of all such pecuniary or other benefits which it may receive or derive / have received or derived through / upon unauthorized use of fee for purpose other than that of which the fee was intended or the assets, purchased largely from out of "Government Grants". The decision of the CEO, NITI Aayog or the administrative head of the NITI Aayog as regards the monetary value of aforementioned to be surrendered /paid to the Government will be final and binding on the Society/Trust/Institution/ Organisation/ Researcher.
- d. The Obligator or the sureties shall, in the event of breach or violation of the terms and conditions mentioned in the Letter of Approval, refund to the Government on demand and without demur the entire amount of ₹. .... (Rupees ) or such part thereof as may be mentioned in the Notice Demand issued by the Government along with the interest thereon at the rate of 11.50% compounded annually (which would be adjusted as per the Government of India notification issued from time to time) from the date of receipt of the said amount by the Obligator up to the date of refund thereof to the Government.
- e. The obligator and the surety assure and confirm that they have understood the scheme of assistance of sanction mentioned therein and they have executed this bond voluntarily and out of their free will.
- f. The Government of India has agreed to bear the stamp duty, if any, chargeable on these presents.

5 In witness thereof these presents have been executed on behalf of the Obligator and the Sureties the day and year here in above written and accepted for (Name and Designation) on the day and year appearing against his signature.

**Signed with date .....**  
(Name.....)

**1 Signature of the Surety** (Name and Designation of Surety with Identity Card such as Aadhaar/ Voter/ PAN/ ID card No (attach copy)..... )

**2** In the presence of:

(i).....  
(Name & Address of witness) (Signature)  
Aadhaar/ Voter/ PAN/ ID card No (attach copy).....

(ii).....  
(Name & Address of witness) (Signature)  
Aadhaar/ Voter/ PAN/ ID card No (attach copy).....

**3 Accepted for and on behalf of the President of India by.**