

GUIDELINES

for

Funding, Review and Monitoring of Projects

**Under
National Agricultural Science Fund**



National Agricultural Science Fund
Indian Council of Agricultural research
New Delhi- 110012

National Agricultural Science Fund (NASF)

Introduction

The Indian National Agricultural Research System (NARS) has to find solutions for the immediate problems of farming as well as keep its competence in technology development in the forefront to meet all continuously emerging anticipated and unanticipated problems. Basic and strategic research and applied research in the frontier areas of agricultural sciences are the 'pacemaker' of technology development. Fully realizing this need, the Government of India decided to establish a national fund for supporting basic and strategic research with the objective of building capacity for basic and strategic research for solving agricultural problems of immediate, long-term and anticipatory nature, building partnership of all required expertise available in all disciplines and institutions in all over the country and to make India a global leader in research for development.

The Fund was named as 'The National Fund for Basic, Strategic and Frontier Application Research in Agriculture' (NFBSFARA). With the experience gathered during the 10th and 11th Plan Periods, results obtained and the base created, it was decided by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi in consultation with the Empowered Committee of the NFBSFARA that the fund must be given a wider perspective and arena. A strong and sustainable platform that would help develop a scientific capacity and culture in the extended NARS capable of ensuring continuous flow of knowledge and frontier technology of the best and appropriate quality for solving problems in agriculture and also provide a source of science policy for agriculture. Commensurate with this requirement the name of the Fund was changed to 'National Agricultural Science Fund' during the XII Plan.

Objectives

The main objective of the scheme has been to build capacity for basic, strategic and cutting edge application research in agriculture and address issues which can be solved by intensive basic and strategic research jointly by team(s) of organizations/ institutions. Underlying this objective are the following aims:

- Foster research and a research culture that will use and advance the frontiers of scientific knowledge to effectively meet the present, anticipated and unanticipated problems of agriculture through various modes and critical investments in research projects.
- Build the capability of the National Agricultural Research System through development of wide partnerships in science through projects.
- Build a storehouse of advancement of knowledge in science related to agriculture and awareness of the national importance of basic and strategic research in agriculture.
- To provide policy support to the decision makers for use of basic and strategic research in agriculture.
- Organizations of workshop, seminars, conferences etc. to create awareness, prioritization, scientific popularization and related issues

Vision

Harnessing science at the frontier of current knowledge and beyond for continually replenish the well of scientific knowledge for agricultural development and prosperity of the farmer.

Mission

To use frontier science and the national scientific talents to advance the problem solving capacity of the extended national agricultural research system and the development of a dynamic knowledge base of Indian agriculture.

Strategic Priority Areas for the Call VIII:

1. Genomics, transgenics and nanotechnology in plants, animals and fisheries

Genomics, understanding pathways and mechanisms using genomic tools, transgenics, techniques of transformation like methods of transformation and mode of integration, genome editing (CRISPR), genomic selection, animal cloning, gene/QTLs mapping and tagging, nutrigenomics, nanotechnology in agriculture

2. Abiotic and biotic stresses and, quality traits in plants

Water stress (drought and excess moisture), cold, salinity and other stresses due to climate change, diseases, insect-pests, weeds, biofortification, bio-availability

3. Abiotic and biotic stresses and, quality traits in animals and fisheries

Water stress, cold, water quality and other stresses due to environment and climate change, diseases, insect-pests, diagnostics, vaccines, antibiotic resistance,

4. Management and utilization of natural resources in agriculture

Conservation Agriculture, climate change, water quality and productivity, soil health, remote sensing, bioremediation, micronutrients, biofortification, soil biota, precision and controlled environment agriculture, nitrogen use efficiency, Cow urine and organic agriculture, application of artificial intelligence in agriculture, sensors in agriculture, livestock and poultry waste management,

5. Mechanization and energy in agriculture

Mechanization in agriculture, farm machinery, sources and utilization of energy, alternate sources of energy, post-harvest and value addition, food processing, health food, use of agricultural wastes, application of sensors in agriculture

6. Research in Social Sciences

Research in extension and economics for extension strategies/ models, convergence, linkages and partnerships for improving agricultural extension systems, empowerment of farmers and agri-entrepreneurships, return to investment, promotion of value chains, gender issues

NASF Board (Empowered Committee)

The NASF Board (Empowered Committee), the apex body of governance of NASF is constituted and approved by the Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, Government of India. Its constitution is as following:

External Members

- a) An eminent agricultural scientist as the Chairman
- b) Three to four subject matter experts
- c) Two representatives from other scientific research funding agencies

Ex-Officio Members

- a) Director General, ICAR
- b) FA, DARE
- c) Director, NASF/ ADG (Convenor/ Member Secretary)

The 'Empowered Committee (EC)' or 'NASF Board' is the apex body responsible for the governance of NASF and for all policy decisions including the matters of finance and administration, required for efficient execution of the objectives of NASF towards achieving its vision. The Director/ ADG is the Chief Executive officer of the NASF. He will be the Convener/ Member Secretary of the NASF Board. The Director/ ADG will report to the Director General of ICAR for administrative purposes.

Empowered Committee

1. Empowered Committee (EC) will have a tenure of three (3) years.
2. EC will guide the policy, governance and priorities for funding.
3. EC will make need based modifications in Rules and Procedures while adhering to the guidelines in the EFC document of NASF.
4. EC will evaluate and approve projects above 5.0 crores
5. EC will ratify projects up to 5.0 crores approved/ recommended by the Experts Committee.

Experts Committee

1. Expert Committee will be constituted by the NASF in different theme/ broad areas based on the guidance of Empowered Committee/ Director General (ICAR) and approved by the Director General, ICAR.
2. Expert Committee will be screening Concept Notes, evaluate full proposals and approve/ recommend projects up to 5.0 crores. Screening of concept notes and evaluation of projects will have other supporting mechanism as devised by the ADG, NASF (includes ICAR and experts outside the committee).
3. Chairman(s) of 'Expert Committee' will be available to EC/ DG, ICAR for further clarifications for the recommended/ approved new projects, if EC/ DG desires so.
4. Annual presentations of the projects will be made before the Expert Committee(s) along with the chairman(s) of the 'Advisory' committees (optional).
5. Need based linkage of foreign scientist(s) / laboratories will be encouraged only in rare cases. Experts from foreign may also be invited if required.
6. Experts committee may recommend need based additional fund for projects during the review meeting in consultation with the ADG/ Director, NASF.

Advisory Committee

1. The 'Advisory Committees will be constituted by the ADG/ Director, NASF.
2. Individual ACs will be available for each project.

3. ACs may recommend additional fund of Rs1.5 lakhs to NASF within the approved budget for consideration during midterm evaluation/ monitoring. It may be approved and sanctioned by ADG, NASF.
4. ACs will be evaluating, monitoring and reviewing the project once in a year. Besides it may visit laboratory/field/sites in consultation with NASF office.
5. Chairman(s) of ACs may participate during the annual review meetings of the projects, based on requirements.

Project Funding/ Review/ Monitoring

1. Funding up to Rs. 5.0 crores will be approved by the Experts Committee and ratified by the Empowered Committee
2. Projects more than Rs. 5.0 crores will be presented and approved by the Empowered Committee.
3. The cost towards construction within the budget of the project won't be more than 10%.
4. Funding for foreign visit for attending international conference will be recommended by the ADG, NASF and approved by the Director General, ICAR.
5. The project(s) will be reviewed preferably once by the Advisory Committee and once by the Expert Committee in a year.
6. A Cost Committee chaired by the ADG/ Director, NASF will look in to all the aspects of the budget/ finance of the project before it is placed before the EC and approved. The other members of the committee include Principal Scientist(s) at NASF, Director (Finance) or his nominee and Finance Officer, NASF. The committee will be constituted by the ADG/ Director, NASF.

Funding of projects

Modes of funding

NASF awards projects in two modes, i) Competitive Projects and ii) Sponsored Projects.

1. Competitive funding of research projects with a focus on problem solving for agriculture will be awarded every year in the priority areas selected through a wide discussion. Research related to proof of principle and integration of results obtained from basic & strategic research for providing innovative and advanced technology solutions (not routine ones) with relevance cutting across sectors and locations or difficult sectorial problems begging solutions for long will also be supported.
2. Sponsored projects, meeting the above requirements of class of research and focus in a few nationally important areas of immediate importance as decided by the Empowered Committee/ ICAR will be supported.

Collaborative and multi-institutional research based on novel ideas for solving challenging scientific and technological problems in agriculture will be strongly encouraged for funding. Scientists from all research institutions with proven capabilities, universities and private sectors located in India and recognized by government(s) will be eligible to participate.

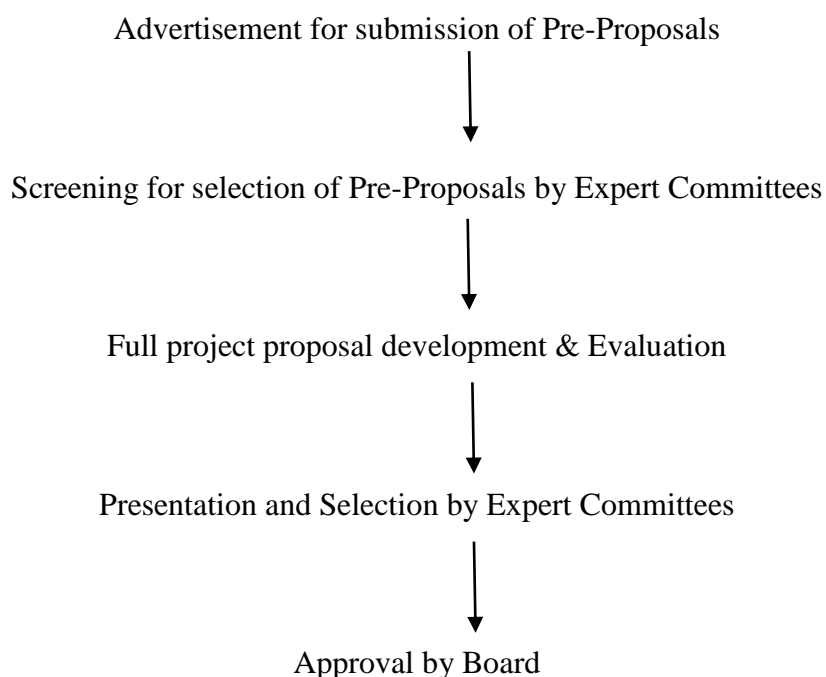
Steps for Competitive Funding of Research Projects

Process of Inviting Projects and Award of projects

Projects are invited in the priority area (which may be changed/ modified based on the observations made by the Empowered Committee) by advertisements in the newspapers, other media and the Website of NASF.

Project Selection process

Competitive mode: The selection of the competitive projects will be a three-stage process (please see the following flow chart).



The method to be followed for the sponsored projects will be decided by the Board on case- to-case basis.

Steps for project submission, selection and approval

To begin with, the Pre-Proposals for projects in the identified strategic areas in prescribed formats will be called through open publicity in newspapers, and the ICAR website. Any scientist or preferably a group of scientists preferably from a group of institutions: public, CGIAR, private, or civil society, with demonstrated and proven capacity in terms of expertise and availability of adequate infrastructure in the area of research will be eligible to submit Pre-Proposals. Any CGIAR, private or civil society institution will be eligible to be a proponent if and only if it is not less than five years old and should have been recognised and registered by a competent State or Central authority as an organization entitled to carry out scientific research. The submission process will be entirely electronic through web. The proposals will be normally for a period of from

three up to five years and should preferably involve multi-institutional collaboration. The budget (realistically estimated) of a proposed project should be within the limits set by the NASF Board. The Pre-Proposals will be first screened at the Secretariat level on the basis of whether the basic eligibility criteria are met. The screened Pre-Proposals will be screened by subject matter Experts Committees duly constituted. The Pre-Proposals recommended by the expert committees will be developed into full proposals in prescribed formats. The PIs will be asked to present their full proposals before the respective committees. The respective Expert Committees will again examine the full proposals. The Expert Committees will be authorized to approve proposals with budget of up to Rs. 5.0 crore, but these approvals also will be ratified by the Board and finally accepted. Beyond Rs. 5.0 crore the proposals recommended by the Expert Committees will be presented before the Board and approved by the Board. Both these types: approved & recommended by the Expert Committees, will be examined by a Cost Committee for finalizing the budget of each project, before being placed before the EC. This recommended budget will be put up along with the respective proposals before the Board for approval. The finally selected proposals will be modified/ improved according to the recommendations of the respective committees and submitted to the Director, NASF for verification and acceptance.

ii. Sponsored Mode: Some of the larger problems of national level importance and some emerging areas of research of high anticipated value for Indian agriculture but will require substantial improvement in expectation and research infra-structure will also be addressed under NASF as decided by the Board, in a sponsored mode. Topics of the sponsored projects will be selected by the Board on its own or through a consultation mechanism or on recommendation of the Council or on recommendations of a competent committee instituted by the Board. The exact mechanism of project development, partnership and selection will be decided by the Board on a case-to-case basis. A limited competition may also be used in such cases.

For the project proposals approved by the Board, the Secretariat will issue the sanction letters in a prescribed format after receiving the duly signed full project documents and the project proposals from their competent authorities. A 'Letter of Agreement' (MOU wherever applicable) will be signed by the funded centres before the sanction letter is issued. The sanction letter and 'Letter of Agreement' will also have clear-cut provisions of sharing IP on the basis of IPR Policy/ guidelines of ICAR.

Financial limits and components of expenditure to be funded for the projects:

The financial limits for the approved projects will depend on the nature of the project and will be decided by the competent approving committees.

The detailed for the budget will be included in the proforma for full proposal. The described procedure may be modified as and when needed by the Board. The Board may also consider the possibility of developing a mechanism for sharing of the costs of the projects between ICAR and the participating institutions including the private institutions. In all matter the decision of the Board will be final.

Project implementation

i. Definition:

The institution to which the lead scientist of the whole project belongs will be known as the Lead Centre and the other institutions which participate in the project will be known as Cooperating Centers. Collectively all these centers will be called as the Implementing Centers. The lead scientist of the Lead Centre of the project will be designated as the Principal Investigator (PI) of the project and the lead scientist of each of the Cooperating Centers will be designated as the Cooperating Centre Principal investigator (CCPI). Other scientists participating in the project whether in the lead center or the cooperating center will be designated as the Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PI).

ii. Responsibilities:

The Lead Centre and the Principal Investigator (PI) will have the overall responsibility of implementing the project. Each Cooperating Centre Principal Investigator (CCPI) and the Cooperating Centre will have the responsibility for the work assigned to the Centre under the project by the competent authority of NASF. It is expected that the Lead and the Cooperating Centers will own the project in its true sense, during the life of the project and after the life of the project so that they uptake the results of the projects and ensure continuity.

The Heads of the Lead Centre and the Cooperating Centre(s) will ensure that the project runs in an efficient manner, provide laboratory space, salary, logistic facilities and services required for the same and monitor its progress on a regular basis.

Under no circumstances except in cases of career advancement or unforeseen reasons like ill health, will the PI or the CCPI of a project will be changed by the implementing center concerned. In the exceptional circumstances as mentioned above change in the PI/ CCPI will be made with the due approval of NASF.

The PI or any CCPI will not be absent during the duration of the project from his/her project site for more than three months (in the entire project period) without the prior approval of the Board. Any violation of this requirement will lead to the removal of the PI or the CCPI concerned from the project if a proper substitute is available or closure of the project/ project component. In the latter case the funds received by the institution of the PI or CCPI has to be refunded to ICAR with any interest to be determined by ICAR.

iii. Reporting:

The PIs and CCPIs will timely fulfil all reporting requirements under the NASF rules and procedures. They will participate in meetings and workshops whenever they are called upon to do so by the NASF.

iv. Extension:

Time extension of the project will be highly discouraged except in circumstances the Board may consider extension of the projects to be essential.

v. Rules:

All the Centers and the scientists will follow the rules and regulations of the ICAR set for the operation of the projects sanctioned under NASF.

vi. Non-completion:

The Lead or any Cooperating Centre shall be responsible in case the project is not completed at all or partially completed within the stipulated time (including any extension approved by the Board). The Board will fix the responsibility and will decide on any action to be taken which include the full recall of funds accepted by the responsible institution(s).

3.1.6 Financial and Procurement System

- i. The first instalment of funds for a new project will be released after the sanction letter is issued.
- ii. Funds will be released by the Secretariat of the NASF directly to the project implementing institutions (Lead Centre and Cooperating Centres), generally twice a year.
- iii. For facilitating smooth and speedy implementation of the activities envisaged under the sanctioned project, the PI and, the CCPI from each Cooperating Centre will exercise powers for executing the project to the extent of sanctioned funds of his/her respective component of the project.
- iv. The expenditure will be made only on the approved items. The amount sanctioned under each head/ subhead is the maximum budgetary limit for that item but the actual expenditure will not exceed the amount actually sanctioned/ released by the ADG/ Director, NASF under the head for the period concerned. In case of public organizations, the expenditure under any head shall be made by the lead or cooperating institution in accordance with their own institutional prescribed rules/ norms. However, in cases of conducting workshops, meetings, and cost of Advisory Committee meetings norms and rules set by the Council as conveyed in the sanction letter should be followed. Any re-appropriation from one head to another is not permissible. All institutions including those belonging to the ICAR will maintain a separate ledger for the project. In case of private and non-governmental organizations the expenditure will be made in accordance with ICAR/NASF rules. In case any guidance is required in this matter, the Lead or Cooperating Institutions should take the guidance of the Finance and Accounts Officer of the nearest ICAR institutes with information to the ADG/ Director, NASF.
- v. There will be no revalidation of unspent funds released for revenue expenditure in one financial year, in the next financial year. For funds released for non-recurring expenditure such revalidation/ fresh sanction will be allowed in exceptional cases. Funds revalidated once will not be revalidated for the second time under any circumstances.
- vi. Accrual accounting system has to be followed for the funds of the project without any exception. The reporting of annual accounts will also be in accordance with the accrual accounting system.
- vii. At the end of each financial year, a Utilization Certificate will be submitted by the designated Finance Officer/F&AO/Comptroller of the Lead and each Cooperating Centre by 15 April indicating the head wise expenditure incurred in the previous year and resultant unspent balances/savings. Only on the receipt of UC, any funds will be released for the next financial year, after adjusting for the savings from the previous financial year. Each of the Lead and the Cooperating Centre will submit

the 'Audited Utilization Certificate' (AUC) for the previous financial year by the 30th September of each year in the prescribed proforma. The Central Government/ State Government Institutes will get the certificate from the CAG/ State AG/ CAs. The Universities (General and Agricultural) and the non-ICAR institutes will have the option to get the certificate from their statutory auditors or from a Chartered Accountant empanelled by the AG Accounts/ Audit of state governments. The private and NGO institutions will get the certificate from a Chartered Accountant empanelled by the AG Accounts/ Audit of state governments. The cost of hiring the Chartered Accountants will be met out of the institutional charges. In case it is not sufficient, the budget under operational cost may be used with the permission of the Assistant Director General, NASF.

- viii. Only after the receipt of the AUC, and the audited Annual Account for the previous year and the half yearly UC any funds for the second half of a financial year will be released.
- ix. Funds for every year will be released after the submission of UC and on the basis of demands for funds and recommendations of the PI and the ADG regarding the satisfactory achievement of research targets set for the period. The UC should be submitted head-wise duly verified by competent finance officer of the institution concerned indicating head wise closing/unspent balances.
- x. The public institutions, state or Central, will follow their respective procurement procedures and rules. The private and NGO institutions will follow the Government of India/ICAR rules and procedures.
- xi. The salaries of the RAs and SRFs will be according to ICAR norms prevalent during the period of appointment. Adequate transparent and competitive procedure should be adopted for the selection of the contractual staff.
- xii. The ICAR will have no liability, whatsoever, for the SRFs and RAs or any other staff employed under the Project on contractual basis during and after expiry of the project term.
- xiii. Institutional charges will be available to the Institution concerned for meeting expenditure on overheads, institutional services, monitoring, reporting, and audit which are required by the Lead or Cooperating Centres to support the project. Expenditure under this item should be properly accounted for.

3.1.7 Intellectual Property Rights with respect to the project participants:

- i. The rights on any intellectual property shall be vested in the ICAR, who shall be the absolute and full owner.
- ii. The sharing of income from Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) from the project would be in accordance with the proportion/percentage given below:
 - (a) Share of ICAR: 60%
 - (b) Share of Project Participating Institutions: 40%. Out of this 40%, the share of major/ inventing partner(s) will be 50% and the rest 50% shall be shared equally among other partner(s) if any.
- iii. The intellectual properties may be licensed against a fee (premium) which may be in a lump sum or with royalty for a fixed/defined period of time.

- iv. The intellectual properties to be licensed on exclusive basis or non-exclusive basis will be decided by the ICAR depending upon the welfare/ gains considerations or public consideration or public welfare embedded in the intellectual properties.
- v. Whereas a minimum price for the intellectual properties is to be evaluated, it may not be rigidly adhered to; and the offers made by different parties shall be given due consideration in consultation with the Empowered Committee on the basis of recommendations of ICAR. The spirit behind this should be to commercialize the intellectual properties in the best interest of the investment.
- vi. If one or more of the partners (i.e., the Lead or Cooperating Centre) of the Project is (are) interested to commercialize the intellectual properties, it may be given preference over other parties at mutually agreed terms and conditions between the interested partner and the ICAR.
- vii. The ICAR will hold the right to use the intellectual property for non-commercial purposes in public interest.
- viii. The services of the inventor(s) rendered subsequent to the transfer of intellectual property may entail earning of charges/fees etc., distribution of which will be as per the clause stated in Para 4(ii) above.
- ix. It will not be incumbent upon the ICAR to protect every Intellectual Property (IP) generated from the Project. On refusal by the ICAR to own the IP, the inventor(s) shall be free to protect it at their own cost provided ICAR has no objection to it in public interest.

Award of Projects

The projects approved by the Expert Committee/ Empowered Committee will be sanctioned by the NASF Secretariat and the project will be awarded.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Each project is evaluated twice by independent peer reviewers: once at the middle of the duration of the project and one at completion. For each project, there is one internal Advisory Committee (AC) consisting of minimum two eminent external experts, the head of the lead institution, the PI, and the lead scientists from the partner institutions as the members. One of the external experts is the Chairman and the PI will be the Member Secretary. The Committee will be formed and approved by the ADG/ Director, NASF. The Advisory Committee review the progress once in a year (more frequently whenever necessary) and provide advice to the PI and help in steering the project to a successful conclusion. The TOR and the financial powers of these committees will be approved by the Board and reviewed whenever necessary. The ADG/ Director NASF or any representative of him/her may participate in the Advisory Committee meetings as a member and may visit the project sites whenever possible. Hence, the Member Secretary will inform the ADG/ Director about the date of the meeting sufficiently in advance. The ADG/ Director may decide to call the meeting of AC or a group of ACs whenever necessary. The reports of the Advisory Committee will be sent to the ADG/ Director for scrutiny and follow-up. The PI will

also send annual reports to the ADG/Director. Major evaluation of overall progress of the projects under the Fund will be done at the annual reviews by the Expert Committee formed by the Director General, ICAR. Besides this, the NASF Board/ Empowered Committee will evaluate all the mega projects (\geq Rs.5.0 crores) and any project it wishes to review/ evaluate. The Secretariat will ensure that the main observations/recommendations of the annual review meetings/ observations of Empowered Committee are implemented at all levels concerned.

Regular monitoring by the ICAR HQ and auditing as per Govt. of India norms and procedure will be followed.

Foreign Visit under NASF

The project(s) sanctioned under the NASF has a provision of the foreign visit by the PIs/ CCPIs of the project. During the entire period of the project, maximum of one CPI/PI/ Co-PI will have occasion of visiting foreign country/ laboratory if the project demands the visit for the successful completion/ meaningful output. The worthiness of the proposal, if convincing will be recommended by ADG, NASF and will be approved by the Director General, ICAR. The recommendation will be based on aspects like publications, technologies & patents generated from the project, timely submission of SOE, UCs, AUCs, reports, data and any other parameters decided by NASF.

Review and Monitoring of Projects

The projects are reviewed at three tier level, *i. e.*, Advisory Committee, Expert Committee and Empowered Committee. A separate 'Advisory Committee' is formed for each project/ Consortium. The Advisory Committee will review and monitor the project in detail, once in a year. Preferably it should be done in the first half of the year. If the Advisory Committee feels the need to monitor the project more than once, the Chairman of the Committee may communicate with the ADG, NASF for further arrangements. The project will be reviewed by the 'Experts Committee' once in a year. The chairman of respective Advisory Committee may also be invited by the NASF (if required) for the Annual Review of the projects. The Empowered Committee, if they feel so may review projects worth more than 5.0 crores or any other projects they feel important to be reviewed.

Documentation/ Retention of documents like Pre-Proposals and Proposals

The concept notes/ pre-proposals and full proposals submitted by different PIs for last three years are retained at NASF. All the old CNs/ PP/ proposals are destroyed and are/ will be not available to anybody for any purpose.

Model Sanction letter (part)

The Sanction of projects will be subject to the following conditions

1. The Principal Investigator (PI) and the Lead Centre will have the overall responsibility of carrying out the work shown in the approved project. Each Cooperating Centre Principal Investigator (CCPI) and the Cooperating Centre will have the responsibility for work assigned to the Centre under the project by the competent authority of NASF and the centre will fully cooperate with the Lead Centre and the NASF authorities.
2. All the Centres and the scientists will follow the rules and regulations of the ICAR set for the operation of the projects sanctioned under NASF.
3. The PI and the CCPI will not be removed/ transferred from the project without the prior consent of NASF/ Empowered Committee of the NASF. However the Head of the organization will be free to add/ remove the Co-PIs/ Cooperating Centre Co-PIs of respective centres with the information to NASF.
4. A Letter of Agreement will be executed by the funded centres for compliance of all the conditions of funding by NASF.
5. The decision of the NASF/ Empowered Committee of the NASF will be final in all matters of the project.
6. Persons with RPM positions won't be considered for award of projects as CPI/ CCPI.
7. The proposed CPI/ CCPI should not have more than three externally-funded projects (including the proposed one) as PI/ CCPI. Out of them the number of projects from NASF cannot be more than two.

Finance and Procurement

1. Funds will be released by the Secretariat of the NASF directly to the institutions/ organizations of the PI (Lead Centre) and to the institutions of the CCPIs (Cooperating Centre).
2. The Lead Centre and each of the Cooperating Centre will submit to the ADG, NASF head-wise Utilization Certificate (UC) in the prescribed format duly verified by the concerned Finance Officer(s) twice every financial year: the first will be the UC for the immediate preceding financial year ending 31st March and will be submitted by the 15th of April and the second a six-monthly UC for the period from 1st April to 30th September of the year by the 15th of October. Each Cooperating Centre will submit a copy each of the aforesaid UCs to the PI.
3. For facilitating smooth and speedy implementation of the activities envisaged under the sanctioned project, the PI and the CCPI from each Cooperating Centre will exercise powers for executing the project to the extent of sanctioned funds.
4. The Heads of the Lead Centre and the Cooperating Centre(s) will ensure that the project runs in an efficient manner, provide laboratory space, salary, logistic facilities and services required for the same and monitor its progress on a regular basis.
5. The expenditure will be made only on the approved items. The amount sanctioned under each head/subhead is the maximum budgetary limit for that item but the actual expenditure

will not exceed the amount actually released by the ADG, NASF under the head for the period concerned. In case of public organizations the expenditure under any head shall be made by the lead or cooperating centre(s) in accordance with their own institutional prescribed rules/ norms. However, in cases of conducting workshops, meetings, and cost of Advisory Committee meetings norms and rules in accordance with ICAR/NASF. Any re-appropriation from one head/ sub-head to another head/sub-head is not permissible. All institutions including those belonging to the ICAR will maintain a separate ledger for the project. In case of private and non-governmental organizations the expenditure will be made in accordance with ICAR/NASF rules. In case any guidance is required in this matter, the Lead or Co-operating centre(s) should take the guidance of the Finance and Accounts Officer of the nearest ICAR institutes with information to the ADG, NASF.

6. There will be **no revalidation of unspent funds released for recurring expenditure** from one financial year to the next financial year. For funds released for non-recurring expenditure, such revalidation will be allowed only in exceptional cases. Funds revalidated once will not be revalidated for the second time.
7. Accrual accounting system has to be followed for the funds of the project without any exception. The reporting of annual accounts will also be in accordance with the accrual accounting system.
8. At the end of each financial year, a Utilization Certificate will be submitted by the designated Finance Officer/F&AO/Comptroller of the Lead and each Cooperating Centre by 15 April indicating the head wise expenditure incurred in the previous year and resultant unspent balances/savings. Only on the receipt of UC, any funds will be released for the next financial year after adjusting for the savings from the previous financial year. Each of the Lead and the Cooperating Centre will submit the 'Audited Utilization Certificate' (AUC) for the previous financial year by the 30th September of each year in the prescribed proforma. The Central Government/ State Government Institutes will get the certificate from the CAG/ State AG/ CAs. The Universities (General and Agricultural) and the non-ICAR institutes will have the option to get the certificate from their statutory auditors or from a Chartered Accountant empanelled by the AG Accounts/ Audit of state governments. The private and NGO institutions will get the certificate from a Chartered Accountant empanelled by the AG Accounts/ Audit of state governments. The cost of hiring the Chartered Accountants will be met out of the institutional charges. In case it is not sufficient, the budget under operational cost may be used with the permission of the Assistant Director General, NASF.
9. Only after the receipt of the AUC and the half yearly UC, the funds for the second half of a financial year will be released.
10. The salaries of the RAs and SRFs will be according to ICAR norms prevalent during the period of appointment. Adequate transparent and competitive procedure should be adopted for the selection of the contractual staff. If felt necessary, NASF may nominate a member for selection of RA/ SRFs.
11. The ICAR will have no liability, whatsoever, for the SRFs and RAs or any other staff employed under the Project on contractual basis during and after the expiry of the project term.
12. Institutional charges will be available to the Institution concerned for meeting expenditure on overheads, institutional services including telephone, monitoring, reporting, and audit which are required by the Lead or Cooperating Centres to support the project. Expenditure under this item should be properly accounted for.

13. Funds for every year will be released after the submission of UC and on the basis of demands for funds and recommendations of the PI and the ADG regarding the satisfactory achievement of research targets set for the period. The UC should be submitted head wise duly verified by competent finance officer of the institution concerned indicating head wise closing/unspent balances.
14. Cost of publication: The cost towards publication of research publications will be guided by the ICAR rules. The centres are not supposed to pay towards publishing their research articles in the paid- journals. However NASF may consider for payment for publishing in paid- journals in exception cases on the case-by-case basis.

Monitoring

1. The sanction letter, and the research project approved by the NASF will be treated as a Work Programme Agreement between the ICAR and the Lead and the Cooperating Centres.
2. The NASF will constitute an Advisory Committee for each project (generally consisting of two to three external members (one as Chairman) who are very eminent scientists in the field of the project. The ADG or his representative, the Head of the Lead Centre or his nominee, the CCPI(s), Head of Finance and the Head of Administration of the Lead Centre will be the Ex-Officio members. The PI of the project will be the Member Secretary. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee may be reviewed by the NASF. The decision of the NASF will be final on all recommendations/suggestions of the Advisory Committee. The names of the External Members of the Advisory Committee and the powers delegated to the Committee are given separately.
3. As the Member Secretary, the PI will conduct the meeting(s) of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee should meet once in a year, preferably in the first six months of the financial year with sufficient prior information to the ADG, NASF. The ADG or his representative will participate in the meeting as far as possible.
4. The PI will submit to the ADG, NASF an Annual Report for the previous year (ending 31st March) by 15 April of every year in a prescribed Proforma.
5. The PI and the CCPIs may be called to present their progress before the Expert Committee, Empowered Committee or in a Workshop/ Meeting organized by the NASF whenever required.
6. A final report of the project will be submitted to the ADG, NASF within 30 days of the closure of the project with all technical and financial details. This deadline will be strictly followed.
7. The ADG or his representative will visit the project institutions as and when required.

Intellectual Property Rights

1. The rights on any intellectual property shall be vested in the NASF, ICAR, who shall be the absolute and full owner.
2. The sharing of income from Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) from the project would be in accordance with the NASF, ICAR Rule (may change time-to-time). The proportion/percentage at present is given below:
 - i) Share of ICAR: 60%

- ii) Share of Project Participating Institutions: 40%. Out of this 40%, the share of major/inventing partner(s) will be 50% and the rest 50% shall be shared equally among other partner(s) if any.
3. The intellectual properties may be licensed against a fee (premium) which may be in a lump sum or with royalty for a fixed/defined period of time (As per ICAR Rule).
4. The intellectual properties to be licensed on exclusive basis or non-exclusive basis will be decided by the ICAR depending upon the welfare/gains considerations or public consideration or public welfare embedded in the intellectual properties.
5. Whereas a minimum price for the intellectual properties is to be evaluated, it may not be rigidly adhered to; and the offers made by different parties shall be given due consideration in consultation with the 'Empowered Committee' on the basis of recommendations of ICAR/NASF. The spirit behind this should be to commercialize the intellectual properties in the best interest of the investment.
6. If one or more of the partners (*i.e.*, the Lead or Cooperating Centre) of the Project is (are) interested to commercialize the intellectual properties, it may be given preference over other parties at mutually agreed terms and conditions between the interested partner and the ICAR.
7. The ICAR will hold the right to use the intellectual property for non-commercial purposes in public interest.
8. The services of the inventor(s) rendered subsequent to the transfer of intellectual property may entail earning of charges/fees etc., distribution of which will be as per ICAR/ NASF rules.
9. It will not be incumbent upon the ICAR to protect every Intellectual Property (IP) generated from the Project. On refusal by the ICAR to own the IP, the inventor(s) shall be free to protect it at their own cost provided ICAR has no objection to it in public interest.

Training, Workshop and Data Management

1. NASF may fund centres for conducting trainings of duration for one to five days and workshop of duration 1 to 3 days on the theme area of the projects, based on the output from the project.
2. The raw data, meta-data and all other forms of data generated during the project period will be submitted to NASF/ IASRI for documentation, along with the reports. The release of fund is subjected to deposition of the data along with the reports and UC/AUCs. The data will be kept in safe custody following NASF/ ICAR rules.