

Guidelines for administration of Research and consultancy Projects at TERI School of Advanced Studies

Faculty members are encouraged to apply for research funding for any call for proposals and should explore funding opportunities for research in their area of interest. Since TERI SAS has the final responsibility and answerability of project delivery, quality and prudent use of funds, synergies and understanding between the project PI, the concerned department, and the project monitoring cell headed by the Dean (Research and Partnership, hereafter referred as Dean R) is very important. To establish synergies, the following guidelines should be followed henceforth.

1. Guidelines for proposal submission

A. Submission of research/consultancy project proposal

1. Ideally, the project proposal should be ready at least 6 working days in advance for internal processes and due diligence.
2. The project proposal should reach Dean research look few of the key parameters-
 - (a) The project delivery, timelines and the budget are feasible.
 - (b) The project deadline should not extend beyond the staff's contract expiry date, or it should have a Co-PI whose contract is within the project deadline.
 - (c) Project team members agree with their time commitment to the project.
 - (d) There will be no disruption of the academic schedule.
 - (e) Consultancy proposals adhere to the guidelines given in Annexure I.
3. Dean R shall coordinate with the PMC officer to vet the financial details committed in the proposal. For any clarifications/doubts, Dean R may call for an in-person discussion with the PI.
4. Dean R will decide within 36 hours (excluding holidays) of receiving the proposal.
5. Under exceptional circumstances, where the deadline for project submission is very near for completion of the above processes, the matter can be discussed in an in-person meeting involving Dean R and the PMC officer.
6. Faculty can submit the proposal directly after the PMC officer vets the budget.
7. All proposal submissions must be copy-marked to Dean R, the PMC officer, and the Department Head.

B. Proposal for event-based activities – training programme, workshop, conferences etc.

They are of two types:

B1- Based on fee collection from participants.

B2- based on a lump grant from 3rd party.

Guidelines

B1. Based on fee collection from participants

B.

2. Guidelines for project initiation on receipt of the project sanction order again define according to category of projects
3. Guidelines for project closure
4. Guidelines for seeking time extension from client

The research/consultancy projects based on the source of funding can be broadly placed under two categories:

1. Projects supported by Government agencies like Ministries or agencies like DBT/DST
2. Projects supported by bilateral/multilateral or corporate organizations.
3. Consultancy Projects
4. MDPs, workshops, and training programs

While projects supported by Government agencies have robust mechanisms for monitoring projects and utilization of funds, many times, projects supported under category two may need more robust mechanisms for assessing the project implementation process. Also, more monitoring mechanisms need to be built in for proposal development in both categories.

Overall, a robust mechanism is required to monitor all the stages, from the proposal development to sanction to implementation, to ensure quality deliverables and efficient utilization of funds, especially avoiding the possibility of overshooting the sanctioned budget. Specifically, the following measures are suggested as standard operating procedures (SOP) for developing a robust proposal development and project monitoring mechanism.

Proposal Development

- The faculty is encouraged to apply for research funding for any call for proposals circulated or submitted by funding organizations on their website.
- It should be mentioned whether the proposal falls under the funded research or consultancy category at the proposal development stage itself.
- While developing the final proposal, the faculties can brainstorm with others matching the areas of expertise aligning with the proposal within the university before submission.
- It is suggested that the budget and timelines be discussed with the Project Management officer to ensure a justifiable budget and timelines.
- After approval from the Project management officer, the proposal's budget will be forwarded to the Dean (R&P) so that the PI can be facilitated in providing all the relevant documents for proposal submission.
- Endorsement cum letter of forwarding after approval will be provided by Registrar's office.

PI must get clearance from the Ethical Committee, Bio-safety Committee, and Animal Ethical Committee (as per requirement Project Project). Project Proposals that require Ethical Clearance/Bio-Safety Clearance will be concurrently submitted to the concerned Committee/s by the PI under intimation to the Dean (R&P). The concerned Committee should convey its decision within a fortnight of submission. In case the same is not available within the stipulated time, the Dean (R&P) shall remind the concerned Chairperson to ensure that the clearance is issued without delay.

- After the proposal submission for records, the Dean (R&P) and the Project management officer should be informed.

Operational Guidelines for a Sponsored Research Project

- Sponsored research projects are headed by a Principal Investigator (PI) and may have Co-Principal Investigators (co-PIs), and the deliverables are the responsibility of the PIs. The university provides the PIs with the necessary support for a smooth functioning project.
- For each sponsored Project, the entire expenditure for the operation Project is required to be met out of funds provided by the sponsoring agency. The responsibility for the operation of the project lies with the PI.
- Preparation and Submission of the Proposal: The project proposal should be formulated according to the format prescribed by the concerned funding Agency. The format is available on the respective websites of each funding agency.

- While estimating the funds required for a project, the following budget heads should be taken into account:

1. Salary of Project Staff, including PhD
2. Equipment
3. Consumables
4. Travel (domestic, international)
5. Contingency
6. Others (any other item)
7. Overheads (@10 of project cost) or per the sponsoring authority's stated guidelines.

- The Institute suggests allocating **20%** of overhead/institutional charges to projects other than those funded by the government. However, it can be negotiated with the funding agency but will be at most 20%.

- The PI should consult the PMO for GST/professional tax-related projects other than those funded by the Government.

International Projects

- Funds are received in foreign currency.
- The research collaboration of the university with the other party/funding agency should conform to both the laws of the countries and international laws.

Consultancy projects

For the Consultancy policy of TERI SAS, kindly refer to Minutes of 45 Board of Management meeting held on 26 December 2022.

Special grants

Sometimes, there are special grants given to the Institute for purposes like grants for infrastructure improvement, lab improvement, conference (from DST/CSIR etc.), workshops etc., where no direct deliverables are envisaged. Those grants falls under the category of projects for operational reasons.

Allotment of Project Code number.

1. On sanction of the project, PI will forward the order to the Dean (R&P) upon receipt of the first installment of funds for a new project with a copy to the Project Management Officer. The PMO will allot a project code no. and communicate it to the PI and other concerned offices within two days. This number must be referred to in all correspondence relating to the Project.

After receipt of funds

2. For Projects supported by bilateral/multilateral or corporate organizations, Consultancy Projects, MDPs, workshops, and training programs), once the internal budget proposed by the PI has been approved by the Dean (R&P), the PI is the approving authority for all expenses within the approved budget. For government projects, the heads are appointed as per the sanction order.
3. For projects other than funded by government organizations, the PI will share the Project Title, Project deliverables/milestones, Cash flow, Internal budget, and Final Closure (in terms of submission of report/any other deliverable, etc.) over email to Dean (R&P) so that PMO can allot a project code number.
4. Once the PI or the funding agency informs the Registrar/PI that the funds have been sanctioned and are likely to arrive soon, a proactive effort from the Finance Section is required to track the arrival of funds in the bank and inform the PI so that work can be initiated immediately.
5. The **effective date of implementation of the project** shall be as defined by the granting agency. If the funding agency does not define such a date, the date of the first expenditure shall be the effective date of the implementation project.
6. All project related expenses already budgeted to client and approved by Dean

Research at the time of project inception, PI can approve expenses within the approved budget.

7. Any expenditure incurred before the allotment of the Project code number and after the expiry of the tenure, Project, shall not be admissible unless permitted by the funding agency.
8. For ongoing projects any travel related expenses or advance the financial approval needs to be verified by the PMO. Once the financial approval is received it will be forwarded to Registrar/administration for necessary action.
9. Any kind of financial expenses, other than project-related within the project cash flow, require approval of the VC on the recommendation of the Dean(R&P).
10. Accounts opened specifically for a project should be operated according to the funding agency's terms and conditions but with full knowledge of all transactions with the PMO, PI, and Registrar.
11. Any deviation of heads from approved budget (internal budget shared for projects funded by other agencies and consultancy projects) within the project cash flow, require approval of the VC on the recommendation of the Dean(R&P)
12. IPR- For Intellectual Property created/generated during the course of sponsored and/or collaborative activity, definite provisions related to Intellectual Property specified in contracts dealing with the collaborative activity shall regulate the ownership of Intellectual Property

For details - <https://terisas.ac.in/assets/pdf/ipr-policy-guidelines.pdf>

Advertisement for project staff.

1. All positions approved by the funding agency under Project will be filled in after the due advertisement.
2. All advertisements to be displayed on the TERI SAS website.
3. The PI should draft the advertisement for staff positions per project guidelines. The PI may seek advice/clarification from the Dean's office (R&P) in case of doubt.

Selection and appointment of sanctioned positions for the project.

1. All appointments for the approved positions under a project will be made through interviews by selection committees constituted for the purpose given in **Annexure II**. The PI will shortlist applicants to be called for an interview.
2. The PI must ensure that the hiring is as per specific requirements, within the financial limits Project, and as per the relevant rules/guidelines of the Institute at the given time.

Purchase Procedures

1. The procured equipment(s), as approved by the Funding Agency project, must have a separate **Project Purchase Committee**.
2. All purchases of non-consumable and consumable items and other expenses will be made under the terms and conditions of the funding agency.

Submission of Annual Statement of Expenditure/Utilization certificate, closure of Project Account, and issue of "No Dues: certificate to the PI:

3. The PI and Co-Investigator/s (if any) will be responsible for the timely submission of Progress reports as required by the funding agency and submission of the Annual Statement of Expenditure (SE) and the Utilization certificate (UC).
4. The Finance Section can facilitate in issuing that latest within two weeks after the PI submits the request. The PMO office will initiate in settling the accounts within three months of completion of Project.

5. Soon after the final account is settled, the PI should submit a request for the closure of the project after its completion and no dues from the office of the Dean (R&P).

The Finance Office can issue a checklist to ensure that all objections, if any, on a given bill submitted for payment are listed at one time so that the PI can comply with all of them in one step to avoid unnecessary delays in passing and paying bills.