



Guidelines

Doctoral Fellowship

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

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

1. Introduction:

1.1. The ICSSR supports and encourages Ph.D. scholars to pursue their doctoral research in social and human sciences. The award of Doctoral fellowship takes into consideration innovative research proposals having potential of path breaking addition to existing body of knowledge. The priority of the ICSSR is to address changing societal dynamics and social challenges through effective evidence-based research to fulfil India's aspirations to become a global power.

1.2. Doctoral Fellowships shall be awarded to Indian research scholars, who are registered for Ph.D. in UGC recognized Universities / Deemed-to-be-Universities, Institutes of National Importance as defined by MoE / UGC, ICSSR Research Institutes and colleges having approved Ph.D. programme. The Doctoral Fellowships for the Financial Year 2024-25 shall be awarded in the following areas of Social and Human Sciences:

Sr. No	Broad Domains	Priority Areas
1.	Economics / Development Studies	a. Innovations in Agriculture and Rural Development b. Entrepreneurship and Start-ups c. Blue Economy d. Natural Resources and Regional Development e. Sustainable Livelihood f. Green Economy Transition g. Fintech and Fintech-based Solutions for Economic Development h. Cooperatives and Rural Transformation i. Emerging Technologies and Socio-economic Development
2.	Management	a. Financial Management b. Human Resource Management
3.	Commerce	a. Trade and Commerce b. Rural and Urban Tourism c. Fintech and Fintech-based Trade and Commerce
4.	Sociology/Social Work	a. Artificial Intelligence: Social Impact b. Development and Empowerment of Vulnerable Sections of Society c. Sociology of Family in India d. Food and Society
5.	Social Anthropology	a. Linguistic Anthropology b. Cultural Anthropology c. Ethnographic Studies
6.	Culture Studies	a. Digital Humanities b. Life, Literature and Thought in India c. Literature and Globalization d. Art Practices and Folk/Oral Forms
7.	Sanskrit Studies	a. Grammatical Tradition b. Manuscript Studies c. Poetics d. Literary Traditions

Sr. No	Broad Domains	Priority Areas
8.	Socio-Philosophical Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Indian Philosophical Systems b. Comparative Ethics c. Artificial Intelligence and Ethics
9.	Sociolinguistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Language, Culture and Society b. Social Concepts and Theories in Indian Languages
10.	Gender Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Women-Led Development b. Gender and Society
11.	Health Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. AYUSH Community Medicine b. Indigenous Healing Methods and Practices c. Health of Women d. Food and Nutrition of Children e. 'Zero-Food' Children : Socio-economic and Environmental Aspects f. Sports and Fitness
12.	Political Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. E-Governance b. G20 Declaration and Global Sustainability c. Human Rights and Legislation d. Contemporary Electoral System e. People's Participation in Politics f. Politics and Technology g. Indian Political Thought h. Indigenous Polity i. Rural and Urban Governance j. Indian Constitutionalism
13.	International Relations/ Geopolitics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Geo Politics b. Indo-Pacific Strategic Relations c. India's Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power
14.	Public Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ethical Governance b. Tribunals, Commissions and Bureaucratic System
15.	Diaspora Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Role of Indian Diaspora in the Development of Bharat b. Multiculturalism
16.	National Security and Strategic Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Defence and National Security b. Defence Manufacturing
17.	Education and Skilling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Digital Learning Technology Integration b. National Education Policy: Implementation and Challenges c. Ethics, Values and Innovation in Education d. Artificial Intelligence and Education e. Skilling Youth for Future Jobs f. Skill Education in HEIs
18.	Social Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mental Health Social Inclusion b. Social Dimensions of Indian Psychology

Sr. No	Broad Domains	Priority Areas
19.	Legal Studies	a. Legal and Para-legal Studies b. Legal History of India
20.	Social and Human Geography	a. Demography b. Migration c. Human Resource and Holistic Growth d. Regional Geography e. Rural and Urban Landscape
21.	Environmental Studies	a. Human-Environment Relationship b. Climate Change c. Sustainable Development Goals in Indian Context d. Renewable Energy Resources
22.	Modern Social History	a. History and Heritage b. Memory and History c. Maritime History
23.	Media Studies	a. Mass Media and its Socio-Cultural Impact b. Mass Media and Society in India
24.	Library Science	a. Bibliometric/ Scientometric/ Webometric Studies b. E-Resources and IT Application c. Metadata Harvesting Techniques and Digital Repository
25.	Language Studies	a. Knowledge Traditions in Indian Languages b. Application of Knowledge Contained in the Vernacular Texts
26.	Indian Knowledge Systems	a. Indian Textual and Oral Traditions b. Indigenous Innovation, Technology and Development c. Development of Pedagogical Materials in Diverse Disciplinary/Inter-disciplinary Areas based on Indian Intellectual Texts
27.	Rural Studies	a. Rural Economy b. Rural Society c. Rural-Urban Migration d. Rural Culture its Signifiers
28.	Divyangjan Studies	a. Intersectional /Multidisciplinary Studies on Divyangjan b. Policy Research for Divyangjan c. Rehabilitation, Innovation Technology for Divyangjan d. Financial Empowerment of Divyangjan

Research Proposals that span across disciplinary boundaries also fall within the areas of the Council's interest. Preference will be given to PhD Students pursuing research in the priority areas of the ICSSR.

2. Eligibility

A) Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship

2.1 Doctoral Fellow should be a full-time bonafide Ph.D. student at the affiliating university/ institution throughout the duration of fellowship tenure.

2.2 The candidate must have a confirmed Ph.D. registration at any of the institutions mentioned in para 1.2 in line with the UGC norms in force. The Ph.D. topic must have been confirmed by the DRC/authorised statutory body of the institution on or before the last date of call for applications. Application submitted by those scholars whose research proposals and topics have not been approved by the statutory bodies of their respective institutions will be summarily rejected.

2.3 The candidate must not be more than 40 years of age on the last date of application. There shall be an age relaxation of 5 years for SC/ST/OBC-(NCL) candidates Persons with benchmark Disability (PwD).

2.4 The candidate must have secured a minimum of 55% marks in Post-Graduation or equivalent grades in any social science discipline. Five per cent (5%) relaxation of marks will be given to SC/ST/ OBC-(NCL) candidates Persons with benchmark Disability (PwD). The submission of scanned copy of mark sheet of Post-Graduation is mandatory for submission of online application. In case, the candidates do not upload the documents, their candidature will be summarily rejected

2.5. The criteria of NET for applying for ICSSR Doctoral Fellowship Schemes will be as under:

- i. 95 percent of the total fellowships shall be awarded to NET qualified applicants
- ii. A maximum of 5 per cent of the fellowships shall be awarded to candidates who are not NET qualified but their proposals are found outstanding in the evaluation of the ICSSR's panel of subject experts.

2.6. Candidates who have already availed UGC Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) / Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship (RGNF) / Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF) / ICSSR / ICAR / CSIR / ICPR / ICMR / ICHR / Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Foundation Fund Fellowship (JNMF) or any such major doctoral fellowship are not eligible to apply. Candidates drawing UGC Non-NET Fellowship are eligible to apply.

B) Institutional Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship

2.7. Candidates applying under Institutional Doctoral Fellowship Scheme shall not be eligible to apply for Centrally-Administered Doctoral Fellowship schemes.

2.8. All the conditions of the Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship (2.1 to 2.6) shall apply to this category also and the fellowship shall be administered through the ICSSR Research Institutes.

C) Short-Term Fellowship

2.8. All the conditions of the Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship (2.1 to 2.6) shall apply. In addition, the candidate should have completed at least three years of research work for Ph.D degree at any of the institutions mentioned in para 1.1.

D) Contingency Grant

2.9. Under this scheme, a one-time grant is awarded to Ph.D scholars registered at any of the institutions mentioned in para 1.1, who are at an advanced stage of their research work. The candidates meeting all conditions of the Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship (2.1 to 2.6) are eligible to apply for Contingency Grant for the purposes of field trip, stationery and computer consumable related expenses.

3. How to Apply

A) Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship

3.1. Applicants must submit an online application in prescribed format and upload scanned copies of the annexures on ICSSR website.

3.2 (A) Self-attested copies of educational qualification and proof of date of birth must be annexed with the hard copy of the application form. The candidate has to mandatorily provide an attested copy of research proposal submitted by the candidate in the institution where he/ she is registered for PhD. The copy of research proposal must be attested by the concerned HoD/Dean. The topic mentioned in the proposal must have been confirmed by the DRC/authorised statutory body of the institution on or before the last date of call for applications and a certificate to this effect must be uploaded during submission of online application and the attested copy must be annexed with the hard copy of the application form.

3.2 (B) Applicants are also required to submit the hard copies of their application and annexures, duly forwarded by the Competent Authorities of the affiliating university/college/institute, within the stipulated time mentioned in the call for applications. The forwarding letters and undertakings must be submitted in original along with the hard copy of the application form.

3.3 The Research Proposal should be either in English or Hindi. Arial/Mangal Unicode font will be used in Devanagari script to fill application form in Hindi.

B.) Institutional Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship

3.4 Applicants seeking Institutional Doctoral Fellowship must submit an online application in prescribed format along with the annexures as mentioned in para 3.2 (A) on ICSSR website only. The hardcopy of applications must however be forwarded by the respective ICSSR Research Institutes. The ICSSR will prepare the merit list of successful candidates and the same will be intimated to the concerned research institutes.

3.5 The ICSSR Research Institutes will intimate the same to the candidates and follow the guidelines of the ICSSR regarding disbursement of fellowships, which will be made available to them after declaration of result.

C) Short-Term Doctoral Fellowship

3.6 The application procedure for the scheme shall be the same as per the conditions mentioned in Clauses 3.1 to 3.4.

D) Contingency Grant

3.7 The application procedure for the scheme shall be the same as per the conditions mentioned in Clauses 3.1 to 3.4.

4. Procedure for Award of Fellowships

4.1. The fellowships shall be awarded on the basis of evaluation of applications by the panel of subject experts. Based on the evaluation reports of the Expert Committee(s), merit lists shall be prepared for award of fellowships.

4.2. The reservation policy of the Government of India for SC, ST, OBC(NCL), EWS and Persons with Benchmark Disability (PwD) will be duly followed in the award of fellowships.

4.3 In case ICSSR feels the need, it may invite any short-listed applicant for presentation before an Expert Committee of ICSSR.

4.5 The merit list of selected candidates of Doctoral Fellowships will be placed on the ICSSR website.

4.6 Only the selected candidates and their affiliating universities shall be informed individually through a provisional award letter clearly specifying the formalities and documents required for joining the fellowship.

5. Duration and Value:

A) Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship

5.1 The value of Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship is Rs 20,000 per month plus Rs 20,000 contingency grant per annum. The total duration of the Full-term Doctoral Fellowship shall be two years. The first award letter will be initially for a period of one year effective from the date of issue of award letter. **5.2** The value and duration of fellowship will be in line with the directives of the Ministry of Education issued from time to time.

B) Institutional Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship

5.3 The duration and value of fellowship will be the same as mentioned under the Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship. (5.1 to 5.2)

C) Short-Term Doctoral Fellowship

5.4 The duration of the Short-Term Doctoral Fellowship is strictly for six months or till the date of Ph.D. submission at the university/ institution, whichever is earlier.

5.5 The value of fellowship will be equivalent to six month fellowship amount of the Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship grant plus contingency grant payable for six months.

D) Contingency Grant

5.6 The value of fellowship is a consolidated grant of Rs 62500/.

6. Joining and Release of Fellowship

A) Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship

6.1 The scholar must join the fellowship within the time stipulated by the ICSSR in the provisional award letter.

6.2 The fellowship instalments will be released on yearly basis.

6.3 The sanction of the fellowship will be issued initially for a period of one year, effective from the date of issue of award letter. The renewal of the Fellowship for the subsequent years shall be subject to

the receipt of satisfactory Annual Progress Report and Statement of Expenditure for the entire fellowship grant released for first year.

6.4 The first instalment will be released after receiving the documents prescribed in the Award letter along with the Grant-in-aid-Bill (GIB) and Registration Mandate Form of PFMS Account of those affiliating / administering institutions, which have not linked their accounts to PFMS for ICSSR grant.

6.5 (i) The instalment of second year will be released only after the approval of extension of fellowship for the second year by the Council subject to the receipt of satisfactory Progress Reports and Statement of Expenditure for the entire fellowship grant released for first year and receipt of the Grant-in-Aid Bill (GIB).

6.5 (ii) The final year fellowship grant will be released in two instalments.

6.5 (iii) The final instalment will be released subject to receipt of appropriate documents such as the Thesis Submission Certificate issued by the Controller of Examination/Competent Authority of the University, soft copy of the PhD thesis, a summary in 3000 to 4000 words along with the audited Statement of Accounts and Utilization Certificate for the admissible grant (in GFR 12A Form).

6.6 The Statement of Accounts and Utilization certificate should be signed by the Finance Officer / Registrar / Principal / Director in case the accounts of the institution are audited by the CAG/AG. Otherwise, they need to be signed both by the competent authority of the affiliating institution along with the chartered accountant.

6.7 The requisite documents at every stage should be submitted within the prescribed time frame.

B) Institutional Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship

6.8 Same as mentioned under the Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship (para 6.1 to 6.7).

C) Short-Term Doctoral Fellowship

6.9 The Short-Term Fellowship will be released in two instalments. The first instalment amounting to 70% of the total grant will be released on receipt of the documents prescribed in the Award letter along with the grant-in-aid bill (GIB) and Registration Mandate Form of PFMS account of concerned affiliating / administering institution. The second and final instalment of the admissible grant shall be released after receiving a Thesis Submission Certificate issued by the Controller of Examination/Competent Authority of the University, soft copy of PhD thesis, a summary in 3000 to 4000 words along with the audited Statement of Accounts with Utilization Certificate (in GFR-12A Form) for the admissible amount duly signed by the competent authority of the affiliating institution.

6.10 The Statement of Accounts and Utilization Certificate will be signed by the Finance Officer / Registrar / Director in case the accounts of the Institution are audited by the CAG/AG. Otherwise, they need to be signed by the competent authority of the affiliating institution along with a chartered accountant.

D) Contingency Grant

6.11 The Contingency Grant will be released in two instalments. The first instalment amounting to Rs 40,000/- will be released on receipt of the documents prescribed in the Award letter along with the grant-in-aid bill (GIB) and Registration Mandate Form of PFMS Account of concerned affiliating / administering institution. The second and final instalment of the admissible grant shall be released after receiving a Thesis Submission Certificate issued by the Controller of Examination/Competent Authority of the University, a summary in 3000 to 4000 words along with the audited Statement of Accounts with Utilization Certificate (in GFR-12A Form) for the admissible amount duly signed by the competent authority of the affiliating institution.

6.12 The Statement of Accounts and Utilization Certificate will be signed by the Finance Officer / Registrar / Director in case the accounts of the Institution are audited by the CAG/AG. Otherwise, they need to be signed by the competent authority of the affiliating institution along with a chartered accountant.

7. Monitoring of Fellowships

7.1 Regular monitoring of Fellowship is done on the basis of Six Monthly and Annual Progress Reports in the prescribed format submitted by the scholar and duly forwarded by the supervisor.

7.2 The fellowship may be discontinued / terminated at any stage if research progress is found to be unsatisfactory or any ICSSR rules are violated or the research topic is changed without the permission of ICSSR.

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

7.4 In cases of delayed Progress Reports, the scholar will be required to give the justification of the delay on which the final decision shall be taken by ICSSR. The scholar may be asked to furnish an Undertaking specifying the date of Ph.D. submission to ICSSR.

7.5 During the course of the Phd, the scholars are required to publish at least two research papers in peer-reviewed journals on the theme of the research undertaken and submit a copy of the same to the ICSSR.

7.6 The scholars must acknowledge the ICSSR while getting their research papers published. The ICSSR must also be compulsorily acknowledged in the PhD thesis.

8. Completion of the Fellowship

A) Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship

8.1 If a fellow leaves the fellowship before the completion of fellowship duration, he/she has to inform ICSSR in advance.

8.1.1 No scholar will be allowed to leave the fellowship under clause 8.1 before completion of three months of fellowship period. If the scholar leaves it within three months, he/she will have to refund the already disbursed fellowship amount in full to the ICSSR.

8.1.2 The scholar shall be permitted to retain the grant released from date of Joining till the date of leaving / discontinuing the ICSSR fellowship subject to submission of the following:

- (i) An updated Progress Report for the said period duly forwarded by the Supervisor.
- (ii) An Undertaking to submit a Thesis Submission Certificate and soft copy of PhD thesis within a month of submission of thesis in affiliating/ administering institution on a Non-Judicial stamp paper of Rs. 100/- (in prescribed format).
- (iii) Statement of Accounts and Utilization Certificate (in GFR-12 A form) for the admissible amount.
- (iv) Refund of the unspent balance, if any. The payment may be made by sending a cheque/ DD in favour of ICSSR, New Delhi or through PFMS /RTGS.

8.1.3 In such cases, the ICSSR may consider to pay contingency grant subsequent to submission of thesis to ICSSR. In other cases, the scholar can leave the fellowship by refunding the entire amount already released by the ICSSR.

8.1.4 The scholars leaving the fellowship before completion of their fellowship tenure without informing ICSSR shall be required to refund the entire amount of fellowship released with penalty/penal interest.

8.2 The fellows are required to submit a Ph D Thesis Submission Certificate issued by the Controller of Examinations/Competent Authority and soft copy of the thesis preferably within a month of submission of the Ph D Thesis to the affiliating/ administering institution for award of the Ph D Degree, failing which the fellow has to refund the amount of fellowship to the ICSSR.

8.3 If, as a special case, a scholar remains on leave due to maternity / medical / extra ordinary circumstances (not exceeding six months) with due approval by the ICSSR, the tenure of fellowship

shall be deferred by that period but the total amount of fellowship sanctioned shall not exceed the fellowship duration mentioned in the award letter.

8.4 Again, as a special case, a scholar can avail a foreign fellowship and re-join ICSSR Fellowship on return with due approval by the ICSSR, the tenure of fellowship may be deferred by that period but the total amount of fellowship sanctioned shall not exceed the fellowship duration mentioned in the award letter.

8.5 There will be no extension if the scholar deregisters from PhD and re-registers to submit the thesis after a gap. The date of deregistration will be the date of termination of fellowship.

8.6 After the thesis is submitted to the concerned university, the scholar must submit the following to ICSSR at the earliest preferably within a month to settle the accounts

(i) A PhD Thesis Submission Certificate issued by the Controller of Examinations/Competent Authority immediately after submission of the Ph D Thesis to the University for award of the Ph D Degree along with a copy of summary (in 3000 to 4000 words) and research papers published. A softcopy of the Thesis has to be sent along with the above.

(ii) The audited Statement of Account and Utilization Certificate (in GFR-12A Form) for the admissible grant as per clause 6.5 and 6.9.

8.7 As a policy, ICSSR does not accept contents beyond 10 percent on Similarity Index. Scholars are required to get their final report checked from their affiliating institutions for Similarity Index and attach the plagiarism report at the time of submission of soft copy of thesis to the ICSSR.

B) Institutional Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship

8.8 Same as mentioned under the Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship including the conditions mentioned in the Clauses 8.1 to 8.7. Further, the concerned research institute must submit the Thesis Submission Certificate and other prescribed documents to ICSSR well in time.

C) Short-Term Doctoral Fellowship

8.9 Same as mentioned under the Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship including the conditions mentioned in the Clauses 8.1 to 8.7.

D) Contingency Grant

8.10 Same as mentioned under the Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship including the conditions mentioned in the Clauses 8.2, 8.6 and 8.7.

9. Expectation from the Affiliating Institution

9.1 The affiliating institution is required to provide the requisite research infrastructure to the scholar and maintain proper accounts.

9.2 The affiliating institution is required to give a Forwarding letter in the prescribed format contained in the Application Form to administer and manage the ICSSR fellowship grant.

9.3 The affiliating institution shall open / maintain a dedicated bank account for ICSSR grant (Scheme Code 0877) that is duly registered at PFMS portal for release of the Doctoral Fellowship Grant without any delay.

9.4 The affiliating institution is expected to immediately release the sanctioned fellowship grant released by ICSSR to the scholar.

9.5 The affiliating institution is expected to ensure a Thesis Submission Certificate and audited Statement of Accounts and Utilization Certificate with respect to admissible grant, (in the prescribed GFR- 12A) duly certified by the Competent authority including the refund of any unspent balance within one year.

9.6 In case a scholar leaves / discontinues his fellowship before completion of fellowship tenure, the affiliating institution shall inform ICSSR within 15 days and settle the accounts including the refund of any unspent balance within three months.

10. Other Conditions

10.1 The ICSSR will follow the ceiling imposed by the UGC on number of doctoral supervisions under a particular category of guide (Professor/Associate Professor/Assistant Professor).

10.2 The Doctoral Fellows must stay and work full time at the affiliating university / institute. However, they may go on field work with approval of their supervisor. For the rest of the research period, they must continue to work at the concerned university / institute and follow their rules.

10.3 The Fellow shall not accept or hold any appointment (paid or otherwise) or receive any emoluments, salary, stipend etc., from any other source during the tenure of the award of fellowship. However, a fellow may undertake teaching assignments of not more than six hours a week.

10.4 The tenure of Full-Term Doctoral Fellowship is strictly for duration decided by the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India. Any extension will be granted under exceptional circumstances without any additional financial implications to the ICSSR. The total duration of fellowship will remain unchanged under all circumstances.

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

10.6 The ICSSR reserves the first right to publish the Ph.D thesis funded by it, provided the work is recommended for publication by the ICSSR expert(s).

10.7 Defaulters of any previous ICSSR fellowship / project / grant will not be eligible for consideration until the applicant obtains the clearance from the concerned administrative division.

10.8 A fellow is not entitled for same type of fellowship more than once.

10.9 While accepting Doctoral fellowships from the ICSSR, a fellow should not accept job or any other fellowship from any other university / institute. However, ICSSR shall encourage and support the ICSSR fellowship awardees getting prestigious foreign fellowships. Therefore, they shall be permitted to re-join their fellowships after their return from abroad as special cases, provided they had sought prior approvals.

10.10 During the tenure of fellowship, the fellow will be governed by the rules of the affiliating/ administering institution in all matters including drawls of TA, attendance, holidays/leave and contingency grant, etc.

10.11 The selected fellows are expected to do full-time research in India. They can, however, undertake data collection outside India, if warranted by the needs of the proposal. For this, they are required to apply separately for consideration under the Data Collection Scheme of the International Collaboration Division of ICSSR. However, ICSSR will not be bound to support such data collection from abroad and the decision of the ICSSR will be final. In either case, the completion of study should not be consequent upon such data collection support.

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

10.13 Application submitted against a Call will not be considered for the subsequent Calls on its own.

10.14 ICSSR reserves the right to reject any application without assigning any reason. It is also not responsible for any postal delay / loss.

10.15 Incomplete applications shall not be considered for fellowship.

10.16 No queries regarding the awards will be entertained by the ICSSR secretariat until the final declaration of results, which will be placed on ICSSR website.

10.17 The final authority for the interpretation of the guidelines or any such issue is vested with the ICSSR.