

Call for project proposals against Intramural Research Programme of ICMR

Overview and purpose

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) launches its Intramural Research Program to allow ICMR institutes to conduct research based on its mandate and priorities. Each institute has already enlisted five top priorities after a series of discussions, and the list of priorities was approved by DG-ICMR.

The intramural programme of ICMR intends to encourage high risk, high reward research from scientists. Each institute may be awarded between 3 to 30 crores for the projects on the priority areas based on need and quality of research proposals. The list of institution-wise priorities is enclosed herewith. Projects must cover one or more of the priorities.

The following types of research proposals will be considered. Some indicative examples of each category are given below.

Discovery research aimed at finding novel interventions (basic research). Some examples are pre-clinical and Phase-I studies including phytopharmaceuticals and traditional medicines and genomic methods/algorithms/tools for personalized medicine etc.

Development research aimed at developing interventions for screening, diagnosis, prevention, treatment of diseases/conditions or make existing interventions simpler, safer, more efficacious, or more affordable. Examples of such research includes development of Point of care tests, molecular diagnostic tests, animal models for diseases appropriate dosage and formulations, artificial intelligence and machine learning predictive tools/models, phase 2/3 (or equivalent phase) clinical trials of vaccine and therapeutics etc.

Delivery research or implementation research aimed at learning how to overcome barriers in delivering effective interventions to the people who need them. This will include health systembased interventions to increase access, and to successfully implement national health programme or schemes, reducing inequity and improve quality of health care.

Descriptive Research aimed to understand the disease or condition including its burden, risk factors and determinants and pathogenesis mechanism will **not** be prioritized; will be funded **only** if deemed by ICMR to be critical to move towards finding solutions.

How to apply

- 1) Scientists are kindly requested to submit their proposal using the dedicated Intramural Project Management System (<https://i-epms.icmr.org.in/>) after receiving approval from the Institutional SAC (Priority disease categories for the respective institutes can be found on the Intramural project submission portal).
- 2) Subsequently, the projects need to be forwarded to the Director of the respective institute through the scientists' login over the i-epms portal, seeking their approval for submission.
- 3) The Institute Directors will have the convenience to review, approve, and forward the projects for final submission through i-epms portal using director's login.

Collaboration between other ICMR institutes or non-ICMR institutes is allowed under this grant. Scientists from other ICMR institutes or non-ICMR institutes can be included as Co-PI and share grant amount if necessary.

Format for project proposal is provided in Annexure-I (Part A & B)

Proposal Review Process

Two independent external experts will review and score each project proposal. The scoring criteria are as follows:

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| 1. Rationale of the project – is it likely to solve a priority problem? | 20 |
| 2. Possible impact – is it likely to have an impact on health outcomes? | 20 |
| 3. Novelty/innovation – is the study developing or testing a new idea? | 20 |
| 4. Methodology – are study methods appropriate to achieve the objectives? | 20 |
| 5. Implementation strategy – is the study feasible in a timely manner? | 20 |

Projects that receive a score of at least 60 will be shortlisted for review by a Project Review Committee with 7 members. Multiple committees will be formed based on the topic of the proposals. The committee will rank the shortlisted proposals and provide comments that could improve the proposals. Proposal-improvement workshops may be arranged for the benefit of the applicants.

Budget review will be done by a committee of experienced researchers to increase or reduce the budget as needed. Top ranked proposals in each priority area will be funded.

Tentative Timeline

Activities	Date
Release of Call	01-June-2023
Last date for submission of proposal	15-July-2023
Review and selection	15-Sep-2023
Proposal improvement & final submission of documents	15-Oct-0223

Important note for the submission of proposal:

1. Submission Portal will open from 1st June-2023
2. Open the ICMR Electronics Project Management System(e-PMS) portal <https://i-epms.icmr.org.in>. The user manual of e-PMS (under Guidelines → e-PMS manual) is available on the portal.
3. Project proposal submission is three steps process in e-PMS:
Step 1: PI registration/ Login (<https://i-epms.icmr.org.in/userLogin>)
Step 2: Verify email ID and complete/ update PI profile Step
3: Proposal submission
4. After completing mandatory section of PI profile, click on “Proposal submission →Click on Submit new proposal → Select the program from drop-down box as "Investigatorinitiated Research Proposals” →Fill the form step by step.
5. It is advised to carefully read the budget provision available under Guideline for Intramural Research Programme of ICMR and submit the budget in prescribed format
6. Overhead charge will not be more than 3% of staff and contingency for all type of institutes as per ICMR order F. No. Sr.ACO/Misc.4(86226) dated 22/09/2020. Overhead expenditure will not be granted on equipments and travel allowances.
7. Including of at least one Co-PI from PI’s institute is mandatory.

8. PIs are advised to submit proposal well ahead of the last date, since servers may be overloaded and slow to respond.
9. **For any queries related to the call, please contact**

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ANNEXURE I: Format for submission of Project Proposal under Intramural Call

PART-A

(No identifiable information should be included in part-A, Sl 1 to 15)

1. **Title of the proposed research project (up to 25 words):** should be **specific, concise** and yet sufficiently descriptive and informative.
2. **Summary (up to 250 words):** A structured summary should contain the following subheadings: Rationale/ gaps in existing knowledge, Novelty, Objectives, Methods, and Expected outcome.
3. . Does it cover a priority area of your institute? If yes, mention: _____
4. **Area of research (Please tick one or more as appropriate):** Primary

<input type="checkbox"/> Description	<input type="checkbox"/> Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Discovery	<input type="checkbox"/> Delivery

Secondary

<input type="checkbox"/> Description	<input type="checkbox"/> Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Discovery	<input type="checkbox"/> Delivery
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5. **Keywords:** Six keywords separated by comma which best describe your project may be provided.
6. **Abbreviations:** Only standard abbreviations should be used in the text. List of abbreviations maximum of ten may be given as a list.
7. **Problem Statement (up to 500 words):** State the currently available information to present the problem adequately.
8. **Rationale of the study (up to 250 words):** Mention how the research question addresses the critical barrier(s) in scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or programmatic/ clinical/lab practice and its relevance to local, national and international context with relevant bibliography.
9. **Hypothesis/ Research question (up to 100 words):** Please provide details
10. **Study Objectives (up to 25 words/ objective):** Define the objectives clearly and in measurable terms; mention as primary and secondary objectives, if necessary. Do not include more than 3-¹ objectives.
11. **Methodology:** Include objective-wise work plan under the following sub-headings:

a. Study design	e. Implementation strategy
b. Study site	f. Statistical analysis
c. Methods (e.g. PICO)	g. Ethical issues
d. Sample size	
12. **Expected outcome/ Deliverables aligned with research question (up to 100 words):**
13. **Future plan based on expected outcomes (up to 100 words):**

14. Whether the study is going to generate new intellectual property Please provide details.

15. Timelines with achievable targets: GANTT/ PERT chart to be included.

PART-B

16. Preliminary work done by the PI including the source of funding (up to 250 words):
Proof of concept (if any)

17. Skill and experience of the research team: Highlight only salient points (along with 5 relevant publications) that provides confidence to reviewers that team can implement the project with quality.

18. Institutional Support/ Facilities: Mention the efforts made to achieve inter-departmental or interinstitutional collaboration needed for study implementation, details of coordination between clinical, laboratory and data management procedures, mention:

19. Laboratory facilities (*in-vitro/ in-silico*): institutional resources such as instruments/ equipment and other physical resources available for use in the project proposed animal house etc.

20. Budget: Budget should be as per ICMR guidelines available on the website. Justifications for all sub-headings under budget (as per ICMR format) is to be provided in detail.

21. Conflict of Interest Declaration (if any): PI will be asked to submit declaration, if shortlisted.

22. Additional supplementary information including figures, tables, flow diagrams, etc. can be shared as PDF (20-30 KB).