

File No. R.13011/02/2019-HR (Part)
Government of India
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Department of Health Research

IRCS Building, 2nd Floor,
Red Cross Road, New Delhi – 110001
21.12.2023

To

1. Principals of Medical Colleges/Directors of Research Institutes (As per list enclosed)
2. Nodal Officers of Multi Disciplinary Research Units (MRUs) (As per list enclosed)
3. Director of Mentoring ICMR Institutes (As per list enclosed)
4. Nodal Officers of Model Rural Health Research Units (MRHRUs) (As per list enclosed)

Subject: Guidelines for Multi Centric Studies by Multi Disciplinary Research Units (MRUs) and Model Rural Health Research Units (MRHRUs).

Sir/Madam,

I am directed to say that with a view to promote and encourage medical research in the country and provide assistance for appropriate research facilities, Government introduced a central sector umbrella scheme for infrastructure Development for promotion of Health Research in the year 2013-14 i.e. during the 12th Five Year Plan (2012-13 to 2016-17). The scheme has been approved for further continuation during the 15th Finance Commission period i.e. from 2021-22 to 2025-26. The umbrella scheme has 02 sub-schemes namely (i) establishing Multi Disciplinary Research Units (MRUs) in Government Medical Colleges and Research Institutes to encourage and strengthen health research and (ii) establishing Model Rural Health Research Units (MRHRUs) in rural areas under the mentorship of ICMR institutes to create infrastructure for transfer of technology to the rural areas for improving quality of health services. So far, 115 MRUs and 33 MRHRUs have been approved.

2. The MRU and MRHRU schemes approved for 2021-22 to 2025-26 have provision for allocation of funds for undertaking Multi Centric Studies by MRUs and MRHRUs. Main objectives, broad research areas and operational guidelines of Multi Centric Studies are as under:

I. Broad Objectives of Multi Centric Studies by MRUs and MRHRUs

Main objective of multi centric studies is to proactively support collaborative research activities, identify training needs, and facilitate skill developments and capacity building on diseases of public health relevance.

Contd. -2/-

II. Broad Research Areas

MRUs and MRHRUs are to be encouraged to develop research projects on various diseases/health research issues like Epidemiology; Rhinovirus; Virology (RNA & DNA viruses - existing, emerging and novel); Pneumonia; Hepatitis C; HIV; Influenza; Public Health Surveillance; Bacterial Infections; Environmental Health; Immune System; Respiratory System; Drug Resistance and complications in cardiovascular diseases, Renal problems, liver and kidney diseases, etc., with the specific focus on the following:

- Improving and developing clinical management guidelines, identifying the disease spectrum, clinical trials with new therapeutics, trials, etc.
- Epidemiological studies to measure disease burden, establish disease transmission dynamics, vaccine efficacy, impact, sero-surveys etc.
- Utilization of Artificial Intelligence in pandemic preparedness.
- Community engagement strategies including sustainable interventions
- Improving diagnostic modalities, validating / developing point of care tests.

III. Operational Mechanism for Selection of Multi Centric Projects:

- a. Call for proposals: Proposals will be invited from the colleges/institutes hosting MRUs/MRHRUs on issues of national, regional, or local health importance. The call for proposal document will be prepared and hosted on DHR as well as ICMR websites. It will also be circulated to the MRU/MRHRUs through the respective nodal officers.
- b. National Priority Projects: These will include projects of national importance on priority areas. The projects may arise from the technical division overseeing MRU-MRHRUs or may be actively solicited from the leading investigators of the concerned field and will go through the same evaluation and financial mechanism **as other proposals**.
- c. While submitting the proposals, the financial estimates shall be provided by the applicant (MRU & MRHRU) in the following format;

Budget Heads	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Justification of each budget head
Staff/ Manpower				
Equipment*				
Contingency				
Consumables				
Travel allowance				
Overhead charges (as per rules)				

* Equipment Head should mention equipment name, estimated cost & mode of proposed disposal.

- d. Project Selection Committee (PSC): The received proposals will be screened and evaluated by the PSC. The PSC will consist of members of TEC of MRU/MRHRU and they will be the permanent members of PSC. Experts will also be co-opted as per the requirement and research topics. The frequency for call for proposals will be yearly for the first year.
- e. Preparatory activities for strengthening research milieu: Software that will improve the quality of proposals, manuscripts, policy documents etc. such as plagiarism checker will be procured centrally at DHR. Statistical software for quantitative as well as qualitative analysis will also be procured. Such study support services will be procured centrally at DHR as procuring these multi-user softwares separately for each MRU or MRHRU will not be cost-effective. MRUs/MRHRUs of this network can utilize the softwares procured by DHR as and when required.
- f. Engagement with Participant Sites: Liaisoning with MRUs and MRHRUs for research projects will be done. Sessions will also be earmarked for discussion on research management in the respective colleges/institutions.
- g. Dissemination of findings: the findings of the studies undertaken will be disseminated to all stakeholders by means of publication in peer-reviewed journals, presentation in national and international conferences, guidelines, or position papers, as well as dissemination workshops.

IV. Year-Wise Allocation of Funds to MRUs and MRHRUs

The total budget allocated for Multi Centric Studies under MRU scheme is Rs.12.50 crore and Rs. 5.00 crore under the MRHRU scheme. The year wise allocation of funds will be as under:

Particulars	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Grand total
MRUs	4.17	4.17	4.16	12.50
MRHRUs	1.67	1.67	1.66	05.00
Total	5.84	5.84	5.82	17.50

V. Outcome-Output Framework

Year	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators
2023-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of consultative meetings-1 No. of research studies initiated - 5 	
2024-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of consultative meetings-1 No. of research studies ongoing -5 No. of research studies initiated - 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of publication in peer reviewed journals /abstracts in conferences – 4
2025-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of research studies ongoing -8 No. of research studies initiated - 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of publication in peer reviewed journals /abstracts in conferences – 10 Dissemination Workshop - 1

VI. Activity Wise Fund Allocation From 2023-24 to 2025-26

Activities	(Rs. in crore)			
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Total
Consultative meetings for brainstorming for enhancing research activities in MRUs/ MRHRUs as well as Project Selection Committee meetings	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.075
Software, eg. plagiarism checker, statistical softwares for quantitative and qualitative analysis etc.		0.20	0.30	0.50
Research Projects	5.765	5.465	5.345	16.58
Report writing and evidence synthesis	-	0.1	0.1	0.2
Miscellaneous (Including Dissemination Workshop)	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.15
Total	5.84	5.84	5.82	17.50

The maximum limit for funding of each proposal will be Rs.2 crore/centre. The limit may be extended with the approval of Competent Authority on case-to-case basis. The time duration of funding will be co-terminus with the period of 15th Finance Commission Period (2021-22 to 2025-26).

The ceiling for each dissemination workshop will be Rs. 3.0 lakh. Proper justification for the same must be given by the investigator.

VII. Approving Authority

The multi centric projects as considered and recommended by the Project Selection Committee (PSC) will be submitted to Secretary (DHR) for approval. Thereafter, concurrence of IFD will be obtained.

VIII. Disbursal of Funds

Funds to the approved Multi Centric Projects will be disbursed in yearly installments. The installment for first year will be released along with the sanction letter upon receipt of complete codal documents as listed in ICMR website. The funds for subsequent years will be released upon receipt of Utilisation Certificate (UC) and Statement of Expenditure (SoE) in the prescribed format.

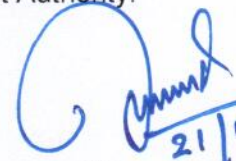
IX. Progress Reports

Annual progress reports of the Multi Centric Projects will be evaluated by the PSC/TEC.

X. Audit Mechanism

The accounts Multi Centric Study Projects will be subject to the Internal and C&AG audit and also applicability of provisions of GFRs.

3. The above guidelines are issued with the approval of the Competent Authority.


21/12/2023
(Vinod Kumar)
Director

Copy to:

Sr. PPS, to Joint Secretary (RK)