

Frequently Asked Questions Under INSPIRE Fellowship

1. What is INSPIRE Fellowship?

It is the 4th Component of INSPIRE Program under Assured Opportunities in Research Career (AORC) Scheme launched by the Government of India to strengthen the National Science and Technology base. It is being implemented by the Department of Science and Technology (DST). This Component is focused on attraction of student to pursue doctoral degree in basic and applied sciences including engineering, medicine, agriculture, veterinary, pharmacy etc. after either masters' degree in science/ engineering/ applied sciences or bachelor/ degree in Medical Science.

2. Who are eligible for application under INSPIRE Fellowship scheme?

- INSPIRE Scholar having secured minimum 65% marks in aggregate or equivalent CGPA at MSc or Integrated MS/ MSc course.
- 1st Rank Holders at University Level Examination (not at Autonomous College Level examination) of overall full time post-graduate program in science, engineering /technology / agriculture / pharmacy / other applied science streams and undergraduate in Medicine i.e. MBBS. However, university shall consider providing 1st Rank for a minimum batch size of 10 students in that university level examination with minimum aggregate of 60% marks of the entire course/ program. Toppers in any subject specialization in Post graduation 2nd year are not eligible. However, merely having the eligibility for the INSPIRE Fellowship will not guarantee the final offer of fellowship. Expert Committee will finally take decision on selections based on the research proposal by the fellow.

3. When can we apply for INSPIRE Fellowship?

In every year the scheme is announced in Newspapers, Websites etc. to seek applications from eligible students in that year and applications are open for submission through-out the year. Processing of received applications would be done on first cum first service basis up to the provision of 1000 final INSPIRE Fellowships every year to offer eligible students. Also check our website <http://www.inspire-dst.gov.in> for regular updates. The online application link can be found here: <http://www.online-inspire.gov.in> or at <http://www.inspire-dst.gov.in>

4. How should I apply for INSPIRE Fellowship Scheme?

One can apply for the Fellowship scheme through online mode only. No offline application will be entertained at our end. To apply online, please visit the link <http://www.online-inspire.gov.in> and follow the guidelines as given therein.

5. Is it mandatory to produce the Rank certificate in the INSPIRE Fellowship format or we can submit what we have received from institution?

Yes, it is preferred to produce the Rank certificate in INSPIRE Fellowship Format (Format provided at <http://www.online-inspire.gov.in>). However, there is no scope of accepting any Provisional Rank certificate or mark sheet to consider this offer. Student should be the 1st Rank holder in his complete tenure of qualifying examination, not in specialization only.

6. What is the selection procedure?

Selection for INSPIRE Fellowship shall be purely on the basis of academic merit of the candidate, choice of the Supervisor, Host Institutions and the Research Proposal. Applications would be screened by two levels of Committees.

7. What is the difference between Provisional Offer and Final Offer of INSPIRE Fellowship?

Provisional Offer: Students who are eligible for INSPIRE Fellowship but not admitted for PhD program, would get provisional selection and they will be given one year validity to gain admission into PhD program.

Final Offer: Students who are eligible for INSPIRE Fellowship as well as got admitted for PhD program would be given final offer of INSPIRE Fellowship.

8. What is the tenure of this Fellowship?

The Fellowship shall be tenable for a maximum period of five years or completion of the PhD program (i.e. up to the date of final defend of the PhD Thesis), whichever is earlier. This includes the tenure of fellowship awarded by any other agencies and availed by the Fellow, prior to availing INSPIRE Fellowship. *The fellowship shall be governed by administrative norms and guidelines of Host University during the total tenure.*

9. What would be our designation after selection under INSPIRE Fellowship?

The entry in INSPIRE Fellowship would be only as JRF there is no any direct entry into SRF.

10. What is the amount of Fellowship?

The Fellowship shall be governed through the Office Memorandum of this Ministry of Number A.20020/11/97-IFD dated 6th August 2007, http://dst.gov.in/whats_new/whats_new10/fellowship10.pdf dated 31st March 2010 and http://dst.gov.in/whats_new/whats_new14/fellowship_revision.pdf dated 21.10.2014 and shall be liable to be revised from time to time as per Government Order. Medical Benefits and other allowances would also be governed by this memorandum. However, the HRA to the Fellows shall also

be applicable as per GoI norms i.e. 30% or 20% or 10%, depending upon the location of the Host Institution

11. What are the norms for contingency Expenditure?

Expenditure of contingency grant would be governed as per host institution norms. The unspent balance of contingency grant at the end of a year may be carried forward to the next year. However after the two years if student has balance of Rs. 20000 or more, there will be no new release of contingency for next year unless that amount is utilized.

12. Where will be the amount of Fellowship transferred?

Fellowship amount to selected students transfers to the host-institution where students are pursuing PhD program. The Sanction Letter regarding the Fellowship Fund transfer would be sent to student as well as to Host University. Student will receive the Bank instruction order through online mode only.

13. What is the PFMS/ CPSMS?

The Public Fund Managing System (PFMS) formerly known as Central Plan Scheme Monitoring System (CPSMS) is a Central Sector Plan Scheme of the Planning Commission which is being implemented by the Office of Controller General of Accounts in partnership with National Informatics Centre. The scheme has established a common transaction-based on-line fund management and payment system and MIS for the Plan Schemes of Government of India.

14. Is it mandatory that Host Institute should be registered under PFMS/CPSMS for receiving the Fellowship amount?

Yes, it is mandatory.

15. What will be my effective date of INSPIRE Fellowship?

The Effective Date of availing INSPIRE Fellowship would be as under:

- Fresh applicants who have already taken admission into PhD course prior to submission of application, the date of acceptance or joining or switching over from any other fellowship to INSPIRE Fellowship will be the Effective Date. *However in any case the Effective Date would not be given earlier than the date of application received at the DST.*
- Applicant who will be placed under “Provisional Selection (P)” or “Rejection (R)” category during the selection process and subsequently issued “Final Offer” by gaining admission into PhD or by virtue of accepting clarification/ representation at the DST-INSPIRE, the date of issuing Final Offer” will be the Effective Date” for the INSPIRE Fellowship.
- **If student fails to submit the acceptance of Final Offer within one month from the date of issuing the Final offer, the INSPIRE Fellowship Offer shall be forfeited.**

16. What is the procedure to transfer the Fellowship from one host institute to another host institute?

Please confirm your host institution very carefully to activate your INSPIRE Fellowship. An INSPIRE Fellow once accepted the offer for implementing Fellowship at a particular University/ Institute/ Laboratory in the country shall not be allowed for transferring the Fellowship to any other University/ Institute / Laboratory in the country during 5 years of Fellowship tenure.

However, in unavoidable situation for continuation of PhD works, the Fellow must seek prior permission, 3 months in advance of shift from DST-INSPIRE Program Division for transferring/ shifting of Host Institute through written applications with following documents:

- No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from both Host Institutes and Research Supervisors,
- Detailed Justifications for changing / shifting of Host Institute for implementation of Fellowship,
- Area of PhD works with an up to date technical Progress Report,
- CV of the Research Supervisor at the new Host Institute,
- Up to date Financial Statement from the old Host Institute

However, shifting/ change of Host Institute without prior approval from DSTINSPIRE may be called for withdrawn of the INSPIRE Fellowship.

Moreover, such shifting/ change of Host Institute may be allowed only one time in 5 years period of Fellowship tenure and within one year of effective of Fellowship at that Host Institute.

If INSPIRE fellow leaves without permission, stipend due at any time shall not be paid to him/her by the Institution, till all University and other dues are cleared and certified by the University/Institution. Responsibility in such cases shall be that of the University/Institution concerned.

17. I am in Government service but I have the eligibility for INSPIRE Fellowship, am I eligible for INSPIRE Fellowship or not?

With the prior permission (Leave without pay, at least for three years) from the Employer to pursue PhD program, you can apply for INSPIRE Fellowship for doing PhD. (During the tenure of INSPIRE Fellowship, the Fellow should not be entitled for any payment from the Employer).

18. I am already receiving other fellowship what should I do for switching over to INSPIRE Fellowship?

When you receive the Final offer under INSPIRE Fellowship please resign from the previous fellowship for switching over into INSPIRE Fellowship and put these details into Acceptance letter (Format provided at <http://www.online-inspire.gov.in>). Please do not resign unless you receive the Final Offer of INSPIRE Fellowship.

19. I have received an invitation for doing a short internship program which is relevant to my PhD degree, Can I avail this short term internship during my INSPIRE Fellowship tenure?

INSPIRE Fellow shall be allowed for availing short-term Research Internship activities at any national or international Laboratory/ University/ Institute up to a maximum period of 18 months either in one or multiple slots during 5 years of Fellowship tenure. However, the Fellow shall be required to inform DST-INSPIRE along with recommendation of PhD Research Supervisor as well as confirmation from Research Internship provider for obtaining prior permission. In the event that the Fellow receives financial support of the overseas institution, the INSPIRE Fellowship for the period of Overseas stay will not be remitted.

20. I have to attend an International Conference, would INSPIRE Fellowship pay to and fro journey fare charges?

There is no such provision of payment of fare charges of any international or national conference during the tenure. However, you may seek financial support through other sources

21. What should be done for getting next installment of my Fellowship?

INSPIRE Fellows need to submit Utilization Certificate, Statement of Expenditure and Annual Report as per the formats available at <http://www.inspire-dst.gov.in>, at the end of every year through Host Institute for receiving the next installment. These documents need to be upload to the portal instead sending by post.

22. How to show the expenditure details in SE and UC if I joined in between financial year.

In such case you have to provide two Utilization certificates

First one would be up to March and second (provisional) one would be up to complete utilization of fellowship up to 12 months.

22. What are things to be remembered while preparing the correct and acceptable SE and UC?

- The balance of Fellowship should not be more than the amount of one month's fellowship
- HRA or Contingency balance will be subtracted from next year's Requirement if it is not utilized in last sanctioned year.
- Fill Expenditure details in online portal only for previous sanctioned installment.
- Uploaded SE and UC should be clearly visible.
- In case multiple SE and UC have to be uploaded, please make one single of file of all year's SE together and another file of all year's UC together then upload at appropriate place.

- SE and UC without the Seal of Signing Authority will be unacceptable.

23. How much time takes place after uploading SE and UC for processing?

- It takes around 4 months to process from the date of uploading documents and no enquiry regarding next installment will be entertained within this period.

24. When will I eligible for up grading my Fellowship from JRF to SRF?

The up-gradation of Fellowship status *i.e.* Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) to Senior Research Fellowship (SRF) would normally be considered after two (2) years of INSPIRE Fellowship at JRF level through performance assessment on the progress made in the PhD program. However, this performance assessment can also be conducted at any time after completion of one year at JRF level with acceptance of at least one publication (1st Authorship) in any **peer-reviewed indexed journal** by the INSPIRE Fellow out of the PhD work done at that Host Institute (within one year).

25. What is the procedure of up gradation from JRF to SRF?

For up-gradation of Fellowship status, a three (3) Members Committee needs to be constituted by the Host Institute's Vice-Chancellor of the University/ Director of the Institute to assess the progress of concerned INSPIRE Fellow. The composition of said Committee would be one Member (drawn from the list of Chair-Persons & Expert Members available at the INSPIRE Website http://inspire-dst.gov.in/List_of_Chairpersons_Members.pdf), besides the Research Supervisor of the concerned INSPIRE Fellow and one Internal Faculty as Member of the Committee. The assessment shall be carried out by the Host Institute/ University as per above process and upon assessment, the Research Supervisor shall be required to submit the 'Assessment Report' (Format available at <http://www.inspire-dst.gov.in>) of the Committee along with the progress Report of the concerned Fellow to DST-INSPIRE Division for further actions. The expenditure related to such assessment shall not be borne under DST INSPIRE. (Please note at least one of the three members of the committee should be drawn from outside the host institution.). The costs for such assessment shall not be provided by INSPIRE. In case of conducting assessment after 2 years positioning as JRF, the date of assessment shall be considered as the effective date for SRF. Otherwise, the effective date would be only after the completion of eligible period as JRF. However, there will be no scope for retrospective effect in any situation.

24. I am not finding any name of expert related to my research area, what should I do?

Your Research Supervisor may please suggest us three possible names who can assess your work and we will do the needful and will communicate you the decision.

25. Due to some problems my assessment happened after 2.5 years but, therefore effective date of SRF should be after 2 years.

No back date will be considered for SRF activation. You have to assess your work in time otherwise after approving the report; your SRF effective date can be started only from the day of assessment.

26. I got the Job please tell me what is the procedure to discontinue my INSPIRE Fellowship?

You have to submit complete financial statements (SE & UC) with Completion report. Any unspent amount should be returned by Demand Draft in Favor of “DST-INSPIRE Program” Payable at State Bank of India, New Delhi Main Branch”. (Format of SE, UC & Annual Report is available at <http://www.online-inspire.gov.in>)

27. I have completed my PhD under INSPIRE Fellowship, What next to do?

You have to submit complete financial statements (SE & UC) with thesis soft copy (Only in CD). Any unspent amount should be returned by Demand Draft in Favor of “DST-INSPIRE Program” Payable at State Bank of India, New Delhi Main Branch”.

28. I am INSPIRE Fellow, I got a government job. Can I join my job and hold my INSPIRE fellowship for some period? I want to join INSPIRE Fellowship again after completing my probation period of job, with permission from Employer?

If you join government job, there is no such provision of holding INSPIRE Fellowship and rejoining again after some period. Your Fellowship will be discontinued from the date of joining of job. Then you need to follow the procedure of discontinuation of the INSPIRE Fellowship. (Procedure given in 24th point)

29. What are the other things which I need to remember during my tenure under INSPIRE Fellowship?

- All kind of required blank formats for INSPIRE Fellowship are also available at <http://www.inspire-dst.gov.in>
- Keep checking the website and registered email for any updates.
- Acknowledge the financial support of DST in your all published research papers under INSPIRE Fellowship and also in PhD thesis.

FOR INSPIRE Fellowship Legacy Users

1. How to register as a legacy user?

Register at the place for legacy user <http://online-inspire.gov.in/Account/RegisterLegacyUsers?Length=7>, only. Please do not register as new user.

2. I have already submitted the Hard copy of financial documents shall I need to upload again the same financial document in online portal?

If you have submitted before December 2014, no need to submit it again in online portal. If you have submitted hard copy after December 2014 you need to upload in online portal only.

3. I have uploaded my financial documents in online portal, shall I need to submit the hard copy to DST?

No

4. I had registered myself in online portal system but there is no uploading option for financial documents upload?

You perhaps registered yourself as new user. Please register as legacy user.

5. I am filling correct details while registering myself in online portal, still it is not accepting and verifying my details?

You please make sure that you are filling correct details:

Program Name: Existing Fellowship Student

Registration Number

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy):

Subject Code:

Subject code and DOB should be the same as given you in your first application.

6. My annual report size is more than the limit, how to upload that?

Please provide only important information and reduce the size of the file.

7. How to show the expenditure details in SE and UC if If I joined in between financial year.

In such case you have to provide two Utilization certificates

First one would be up to March and second (provisional) one would be up to complete utilization of fellowship.

8. Shall I need to give previous expenditure details in columns given in Statement of Expenditure?

Yes you have to

9. Is it mandatory to register myself in online portal?

Yes. We are not accepting any hard copy from the month of January for any further release process. You need to upload in online portal only till any further notification comes in this regard.