

Call for Intramural Ignition-Grant Proposals 2026

Date: 01-09-2026

Overview

All new entrant ICMR scientists will be eligible for one-time special research support of up to Rs. 30 lakh for conducting a research project on a priority topic under the mentorship of a senior ICMR scientist (at least at the level of Scientist E and above), after thorough review and approval by the Institutional SAC. The one-time Ignition Grant is intended for newly recruited scientists to establish themselves and undertake research that will help them compete for larger grants in future.

An eligible scientist may apply for the Ignition Grant only once during her/his tenure in ICMR after joining a permanent position.

Purpose:

- To strengthen the capacity of early-career ICMR scientists to develop research proposals, sharpen professional and research skills, and address operational challenges in project implementation.
- To foster independent research capabilities and innovative research ideas.
- To enhance the ability of scientists to compete for larger research grants within and outside ICMR.
- To strengthen the research capacity of the Institute by developing scientists with advanced scientific and professional skills and enabling high-risk, high-reward research.

Eligibility criteria:

1. Scientist grade and date of joining
 - Must be a Scientist B, C, D, or E.
 - Must have joined ICMR through direct recruitment in a permanent position.
2. For the 2026–27 call, the joining date must be 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026, inclusive.
3. Current place of posting
 - The scientist must be posted at an ICMR institute/centre.
 - Scientists posted at ICMR-HQ, Bioethics Unit, or DHR are not eligible under this criterion.
 - A scientist who moved to an ICMR institute/centre after completing their tenure at DHR or ICMR-HQ can be eligible, provided the move occurred within the specified joining period.
4. Completion of probation — The scientist must have completed the applicable probation period till 31 August 2026 before being eligible for the Ignition Grant:
 - Scientist B: 2 years from date of joining.
 - Scientist C, D and E: 1 year from date of joining.
 - The Institute Director shall verify the probation status of the Scientist before granting approval.
5. Institutional SAC approval is mandatory before submission of the proposal.
6. All codal documents shall be duly checked and verified at the institutional level by the Director before disbursement of the funds.

Funding:

The maximum budgetary ceiling for an Ignition Grant project is ₹30 lakh per project, inclusive of GST. Overhead charges shall not be included in the project budget.

Duration of project:

The duration of the project will be up to a maximum period of ≥ 3 years.

Transfer of the project:

The Ignition Grant project is **PI-initiated** and may be transferred along with the Principal Investigator (PI) if the PI is transferred from one ICMR Institute/Centre to another ICMR Institute/Centre.

If the PI is transferred to **ICMR Headquarters (ICMR-HQ) or DHR**, the PI may transfer the project to an eligible **Co-PI** for completion of the approved project objectives, subject to approval of the Competent Authority and applicable ICMR rules.

Such transfer shall be considered only where the project has already been approved/sanctioned and shall be subject to the applicable ICMR rules, guidelines and approval of the Competent Authority.

Proposal Review Process:

It will be a single-step review by the Institutional Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). SAC may use the following criteria for reviewing the projects:

- Rationale of the project – whether it is likely to solve a priority/frontier research problem.
- Novelty and innovation – whether the study develops or tests a new idea.
- Potential scientific, technological and/or health impact.
- Methodology – whether the study methods are appropriate and robust to achieve the objectives.
- Implementation strategy – whether the study is feasible within the proposed timeline.

Guidelines for Operation of Ignition Grant:

- a) Capacity building: The proposal should include details of the capacity-building component, including training and professional skill development for the PI and research team.
- b) Mentorship: The name of the mentor should be mentioned in the proposal. The mentor should be at the level of Scientist E or above. The mentor may be included as a Co-PI. The PI may include a maximum of two Co-PIs, provided they fulfil the eligibility criteria.
- c) Institutional approval: Institutional SAC approval for the project is mandatory for submission.
- d) Project manpower: Manpower engagement should be encouraged to PTS-I, PTS-II and PTS-III; ([No.16/29/2023/Admn/E.Office No.157401 Dated:18/10/2024](#)) other manpower positions such as PRS-I/II/III shall not be included due to capping of budget limit.
- e) Budget: The budget should be appropriately balanced across manpower, contingency, consumables, equipment and travel, with an indicative allocation of $25\% \pm 5\%$ per head, subject to scientific justification. Large equipment should be avoided to include in budget.

- f) GST and statutory charges: GST and applicable service charges for project manpower should be appropriately accounted for within the approved budget provision.
- g) The Date of Start (DOS) shall be requested within three months from the date of issue of the sanction/approval.
- h) The PI shall submit a quarterly progress report to the Director of the concerned ICMR Institute/Centre every three months, highlighting progress against approved objectives and milestones.
- i) The PI shall acknowledge the Grant ID in all patents, publications, books, policy documents, workshops, training programmes, and other scholarly or intellectual outputs arising from the funded project. **Reference for ICMR-IRIS:** Bahl R. *Publication-Equivalent as the new single currency of research impact: The ICMR-Impact of Research and Innovation Scale (ICMR-IRIS)*. *Indian J Med Res.* 2025;162(2):135-138. Kindly refer <https://ijmr.org.in/publication-equivalent-as-the-new-single-currency-of-research-impact-the-icmr-impact-of-research-and-innovation-scale-icmr-iris/>
- j) Since the Ignition Grant is intended as a seed-support mechanism for newly recruited scientists, applicants are encouraged to minimize requests for high-cost or major equipment and, wherever feasible, utilize existing institutional facilities.

Submission details:

Important note for the submission of proposal:

- The portal for uploading the ignition-grant projects will remain open from 1st September 2026 till 30th September 2026, 1700hrs.
- The submission should be approved by the Institute Director/Director-in-Charge before the submission deadline
- Open the ICMR Electronics Project Management System (i-e-PMS) portal <https://i-epms.icmr.org.in/>. The user manual of i-e-PMS (under Guidelines) is available on the portal.
- Project proposal submission is a three-step process in i-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
- After completing the mandatory section of PI profile, click on Proposal submission → Click on Apply → Select the call from the drop down → Apply New Proposal → Fill the form step by step.
- It is advised to carefully read the budget provision available under the Guideline for Intramural Research Programme of ICMR and submit the budget in the prescribed format
- For detailed guidelines, application format, submission procedure and deadline, please refer to the official notification/portal of the ICMR Intramural Grants.
- PIs are advised to submit proposals well ahead of the last date, since servers may be overloaded and slow to respond.

For any queries related to the call, please contact:

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