



Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF)

Indo-U.S. Virtual Networked Center

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What are the kinds of Joint Centers that are supported by IUSSTF?

Knowledge R&D Networked Centers

Knowledge R&D Networked Centers aim to encourage joint project implementation on focal areas of thematic and knowledge research through networking thus, paving way to sustainable interactions by promoting excellence and developing long term relationship based on synergy of activities. Networked Centre may also provide opportunities for integrating research with education.

Public-Private Networked Centers

Public-Private Networked Centers aim to foster academia-industry partnership by promoting pre-commercial R & D activities having potential towards applied research and product development. These Centers are aimed to best capitalize on the scientific and technological innovation and entrepreneurship in translating ideas from bench to market place.

2. Please elaborate on the Review Process followed for selection.

- Proposals received are sent out for peer-review in India and the United States. Reviewers are provided with an Evaluation Format wherein the evaluators are asked to rate the proposal on the following specific indices:
 - Impact (*Scientific merit of the proposed activity. What is its significance to its field of study? What is the strength of its contribution toward the advancement of knowledge or future development in the field?*)
 - Novelty (*Creativity of the proposed activity. Does it introduce novel concepts or methodologies? Does it challenge existing standards and/or protocols to suggest new ones?*)
 - Feasibility (*Feasibility of the approach. Does the proposed project consist of a well thought-out plan that can be easily executed given its particular environment and resources?*)

- Investigators (*Appropriateness of the investigators for this project. Do their areas of expertise match the necessary requirements for the success of the proposed activity?*)
 - Global Implications (*Is the proposed activity relevant and does it contribute to scientific and technological capacity-building in both US and India? Does it promote future collaboration between researchers in these two states?*)
- Additionally, the Reviewers provide subjective comments indicating any concerns and/or suggestions they may have regarding the proposal, and identify any issues that require further clarifications.
 - Each proposal is reviewed by at least 3 Expert Evaluators on each side.
 - Taking into consideration the reviewer comments and the overall scores from both India and the United States, IUSSTF prepares a list of proposals that would be eventually be considered for support based on the available budget for the activity in the said financial year.
3. How many partnering institutions are required for proposal submission?
Each proposed center should have a minimum of 2 Indian and 2 US Partners. There can however be more than two partners on each side as well.
4. Can the proposal include Industry partners as well?
Industries can participate too - this center would then fall under the ambit of “Indo-U.S. Public-Private Networked Centers” Program. However, no travel support will be extended to Industry participants.
5. Can there be partners from countries other than the United States of America in the proposal?
No, IUSSTF supports only bilateral (Indo-U.S.) activities, events, and initiatives that promote interactions between the scientific and research communities in India and the United States.
6. What is the nature of funding provided for selected proposals?
- Round-trip international airfare
 - Per-diem (Subsistence Allowance)
 - Accommodation
 - Related Travel Costs
 - Contingencies

7. Is there any guidance on the maximum budget/extent of funding?

After a highly competitive evaluation process, IUSSTF offers partial support to a small number of Joint Centers due to availability of limited funds. The extent of funding is max. upto INR 50 lakhs for a two-year Center. (Disbursement as per IUSSTF guidelines). Applicants are welcome to approach other funding agencies for additional funding.

8. How would the international travel arrangements be done?

The air-tickets for all exchange visits under the joint center will be provided by IUSSTF travel desk only by economy class and shortest route. Advance intimation of travel (prior two months) must be provided to IUSSTF by Nodal PI/Partner(s) so as to facilitate the ticketing by IUSSTF travel desk.

9. Can the partner(s) book their own tickets and seek reimbursement from IUSSTF?

Reimbursements may be permissible in certain cases. However, prior approval should be sought from IUSSTF before making travel arrangements.

10. How will the grant-in-aid be disbursed?

The grant-in-aid will be released to the Indian Nodal Institution (Lead Indian Partner). Nodal PI is mandated to provide advance intimation on travel request at least one month ahead of any exchange visit, subsequently the grants-in-aid will be released to the Indian lead Institution administering the Indo-U.S. Joint R&D Networked Center for facilitation of the said project.

11. Would the funds cover indirect costs?

The heads of expenditures covered under this grant will be strictly as indicated in the budget format. IUSSTF does not provide any financial support for items of expenditure (e.g. Overheads, indirect costs etc.) which are not mentioned in the budget format.

12. What is the mechanism to handle IP issues?

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) are subject to Annex I- Intellectual Property (IPR Annex) of the Agreement on Science and Technology Cooperation between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of India (S&T Agreement, 2005) and the respective standard IPR provisions of the Parties to the extent it is not in contravention with the IPR annex.

13. What is Budget ceiling-for each partner? What does "Proof of project funding available with respective partners" refer to? Does this refer to project funding for same application or does it refer to all on-going projects funding available under the specific investigators?

The Budget ceiling for contributions from each partner is left to the discretion of the Partnering institutions – there is no specified ceiling/floor for this amount. Proof of Project funding refers to the contribution agreed upon by the Partnering Institutions, specifically towards the proposed center.

14. If funded, could the funding be used for setting up a lab for the Center?

The JC funding does not support laboratory infrastructure of any kind. It is purely meant for connectivity i.e. movement of faculty/scientists and students between collaborating institutions.

15. All the participating institutes have to submit the letters of institutional support stating commitments of the partnering institutions. Do we have a specific format? What should be explained in the letter?

There is no specified format for the letter of support from the partners. However, it should be a brief letter from the Partner Institution outlining the Investigator's support to the center, financially or for the manpower involved.

16. Can one show a whole Industry consortium as a single partner Industry or they have to identify a specific Industry partner only?

A whole Industry consortium can be considered. The composition of the consortium along with the roles and responsibilities of each partner should be clearly outlined in the proposal

Please note that IUSSTF reserves the right to adapt its policies and priorities over time, depending on circumstances. Revisions to these FAQs may be posted at a later date.