

# **Research Initiative for Real Time River Water and Air Quality Monitoring**

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)**

1. What will be the eligibility criteria to apply for the Grant-in-aid?
  - National Laboratories, Academic Institutions and autonomous Research Organizations in India are eligible to apply for the Grant-in-aid.
  - The participation of at least one U.S. entity is mandatory. Partnership of users and other stakeholders is desirable.

**Note:** Indian research groups are encouraged to collaborate with academic counterparts in U.S./EU. They are urged to leverage and integrate intellectual resources/skillset of a highly specialized nature from U.S./European Institutions into the proposal(s) with a clear indication of value enhancement, such that approximately 75% of the total grant is spent in India.

2. What would be the evaluation criteria for the submitted proposals?

The proposals would be evaluated based on the following key points-

- Soundness of ‘proof of concept’; potential to address multiple research vectors, ideally delivering or substantially enabling an integrated end-to-end solution spanning all research vectors.
- Technical innovation, non-incremental potential, and relevance. The extent to which the proposal’s problem formulation and key approaches are innovative, important, and relevant to the problem at hand.
- Clarity of overall objectives, intermediate milestones, and success criteria. Adequacy and feasibility of the applicant's technical approach, work plan, and management plan.
- Appropriateness of the division of the activities into logical phases, tasks, and subtasks necessary to accomplish the project’s objectives.
- Demonstrated experience of the applicant and participating organization(s) in the technology areas addressed in the application and in managing similar projects.
- Appropriateness and extent of key personnel credentials, capabilities, and experience.
- Cost effectiveness and cost realism. The extent to which the proposed work is both feasible and impactful within the proposed resource levels.
- Potential for co-funding. Opportunity for matching grants and co-funding from other agencies will be given significant consideration.

3. Is it essential to develop four vectors as mentioned in guideline? Is it possible to develop two or three vectors?

The proposals outcomes should have the potential to address multiple research vectors, ideally delivering or substantially enabling an integrated end-to-end solution spanning all research vectors. It will be advisable for all the four Research Vector (s) to be included into the Proposal so as to meet the overall objective of the Program.

4. Would applications in areas other than those specified under Research Vector (s) qualify for the proposal?

Innovative proposals that include activities beyond the identified research vector (s) but promise to provide disruptive gains towards the program goals will also be considered for support.

5. What if an Indian group is partnering with European Institutions (EU) with no US partner, will such collaboration be eligible for funding? Can a company apply for funding under this program? Is US partnership/collaboration mandatory?

Atleast one US academic partner is **mandatory**. Other stakeholder's participation (e.g. academic counterparts in EU or any other Company) is desirable. All identified partners of a team, must have clearly specified roles and contributions.

6. Is there any guidance on fund sizes and durations for the projects? How many such initiatives are expected to be identified under this initiative?

Two fully integrated projects with interdisciplinary teams - one for river and another for air quality monitoring, are intended to be supported for duration of 5 years and at a total cost ceiling of about INR 15 Crore, each.

7. What is the funding available for deployment for water and air quality monitoring in real-time?

Applicants are advised to keep a provision for setting of test beds for deployment. This would be limited to test beds in a controlled environment.

8. Can one group submit one proposal covering both air and water components together worth 30 Crore?

It is advisable to submit two separate proposals for each category-one for river water and another for air quality monitoring at a total cost ceiling of about INR 15 Crore each.

9. Can I apply for two different proposals in each category i.e. one for River water and another for Air quality monitoring?

Yes.

10. Whether funding is provided to U.S. Research partners?

Out of the total project cost, 25% of the funds can be spent outside India i.e. can be utilised by the US partner or other stakeholders. However, **75 % of the total projected cost** has to be spent within India only.

11. Are equipment, manpower, consumables, contingency, travel etc. covered under this grant?

Yes. Request for grants can be apportioned under these heads with proper justification. The cost of international travel and user charges for sophisticated facilities/services to leverage international linkages can be factored into the overall budget of the proposal. The decision of DST/INTEL/IUSSTF regarding the budget and its breakup would be final.

12. Can we charge manpower cost for regular employees? Will fund be available for Contract manpower only? What will be the emoluments for the Contract Engineers working in the project? Is there any fixed rate?

As a matter of policy, we **do not** provide the manpower cost for regular employees. However, we will support the manpower costs for project staff whose contract is co-terminus with the project duration. Salary emoluments would be as per prevailing DST norms.

13. Will funds available for setting up a new Pvt. Laboratory whose functional area is quite similar to the objective of the Program?

Funding will not be available for such an activity.

14. Whether any Environmental Laboratory/ autonomous Research Organization can be covered under "National Laboratories" heading as per the eligibility?

No. National Laboratories/autonomous Research Organisations should have a federal/provincial/county funding or Central /state (in Indian case).

15. Is there a condition that one institute will get only one award?

No. There is no such specified condition.

16. What about the protection of intellectual property (IP)?

- The IP developed under this grant will be placed in the public domain, including offering software under an open source license; or,
- The Intellectual Property generated as part of the program would rest with the Institution(s) that develop it and Intel would have the first right to refusal for non-exclusive royalty free licensing.

17. What would be the review process for the submitted proposal?

The Proposals received would be reviewed by a Project Evaluation & Monitoring Committee (PEMC) comprising of eminent Experts. DST and Intel reserve the right for selection of the research teams. The selected proposals will be announced on the IUSSTF website and the PI's will be informed via electronic mail.

18. How should the team set the milestones for the Project and what are the expectations regarding the progress each year.

Milestone of the project must specify significant point of achievement or development during the implementation phase of the project. The milestones would be set based on the objectives of the project. There would be an annual review undertaken and the release of the next tranche of funding would be based on the achievement of the set milestones.

19. How actively would be funding organization be involved throughout the research?

The Funding Agencies (Intel and DST) and the Administering Agency (IUSSTF) would be actively involved in the progress and monitoring of the project throughout the project term.

20. What are the expectations after the Grant has been awarded?

The grantee will be required to meet pre-determined milestones and grants will be released upon meeting each milestone. The grant-in-aid would be released in equal instalments over a 5-year period. Applicants are therefore advised to prepare the budget accordingly.

21. All the participating organizations have to submit the letters of commitment (LOC). Do we have a specific format?

Yes, there is a specified format for the letters of commitment which are required from each organization participating as a team member. (**Annexure II**). Each LOC from an organization participating as a team member must be signed by the person authorized to commit the organization to a legally binding agreement.

**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.**