Directorate of Environment & Climate Change

Government of Kerala

4th Floor, KSRTC Bus Terminal Complex, Thampanoor P.O.

Thiruvananthapuram- 695 001; Ph: +91471-2326264 (Off)

E-mail: environmentdirectorate@gmail.com, envt.dir@kerala.gov.in

Web: www.envt.kerala.gov.in

Specific Guidelines of 'Ujjwal' Post Doctoral Fellowship under Climate Change Scheme

The Directorate of Environment & Climate Change (DoECC) under the Department of Environment has been established to coordinate all the environment and climate change-related activities in the State. Climate change poses a grave challenge to the sustainability of social and economic development, livelihoods of communities, and environment management in Kerala. India has pursued a strong domestic agenda to counter climate change while engaging constructively with the international community in advancing actions to address this global challenge. Over the years, our country has pursued major domestic policies and schemes in areas of climate change mitigation and adaptation actions, particularly in the fields of water and soil conservation, carbon neutral, clean and renewable energy, enhancement of energy efficiency, development of less carbon-intensive and resilient urban development, promotion of waste to wealth, electric vehicles, etc.

The Plan Scheme 'Climate Change' of DoECC focuses on projects related to scientific and technological interventions for climate change mitigation and adaptation in different sectors, conservation, and management of natural resources, to attain sustainable developmental goals, sustainable livelihoods, etc.

The 'Ujjwal Fellowship' is an initiative to promote Post Doctoral Research in climate change mitigation and adaptation, climate projections, climate change vulnerability analysis on different sectors, ecosystem-based risk assessments, socio-economic impacts especially on vulnerable communities, etc. The main objective of the Post Doctoral Fellowship (PDF) program is to encourage and retain young Ph.D. scholars with high potential and promise to conduct full-time research on specific themes and

issues related to climate change. Such studies are expected to contribute to theoretical and conceptual advancement in different aspects; help to generate field work based empirical data and contribute towards policy making. This may also help to develop technical and leadership skills in developing their career as efficient scientists.

Application process (How to Apply)

The applications shall be invited each year and the same will be notified on the DoECC website; Other institutions and affiliates shall be encouraged to replicate it on their websites.

Interested candidates shall submit the application in the prescribed format as indicated on the DoECC website.

It is mandatory that the applicant has been awarded a Ph.D. degree. It is also necessary to obtain the concurrence of the mentor to accept the applicant as a postdoctoral fellow. The proposed mentor must have at least three Ph.D. students guided/supervised toward successful completion of the Ph.D. work. The application will be processed further on satisfying these requirements.

The Technical Committee constituted by the Government for the selection of Ujjwal fellowships, shall evaluate and select the applications. Based on the recommendation of the Technical Committee, the Directorate will make the final announcements. Since this is a promotional scheme to inculcate postdoctoral research culture, emphasis during the review process/selection will be on an appropriate mix of the candidate's accomplishment at the Ph.D. level and the professional standing of the mentor and institution where the postdoctoral research is to be carried out. In general, candidates would be encouraged to move to other institutions and newer areas of research.

The review process of applications shall be completed typically within four months from the last date for submission of the application. The result shall be notified on the DoECC website. No interim inquiries will be entertained within this period. The Ujjwal Fellowship is restricted to natives of the Kerala State.

The following should be noted before applying for the Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme:

1. **These fellowships are open to candidates who have obtained Ph.D. degree and are meant for full-time research work.**

2. **The fellowships are open to young researchers below the age of 40 years.**
3. **The fellowships are tenable at Science/ Social Sciences Departments (including Medical & Engineering Sciences) at Universities/Institutions in the State which are eligible to receive developmental grants.**
4. **Candidates should have published at least two research publications in Science Citation Indexed Journals or one patent.**
5. **In general, the postdoctoral work should be undertaken in a place different from where the candidate has carried out his/her Doctoral studies and the Ph.D. guide of the candidate cannot be chosen as his/her mentor for this program.**
6. **It is necessary to identify a Mentor with whom the candidate would like to work for his/her postdoctoral research.**
7. **The mentor should have at least three Ph.D. students guided/supervised towards the successful completion of the Ph.D. work. In addition, the Mentor should have more than four years of service period at the time of submission of the Application. In the case of Mentors who would be superannuating during the Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme tenure, association of a qualified "in service" Faculty should be ensured. In such cases, the Institute Authorities should inform the Directorate, well in advance, about their "no objection" to providing the infrastructural facilities to the new Mentor.**
8. **Candidates who have been awarded Ujjwal Fellowship once are not eligible to apply again.**
9. **Candidate should bring a consent letter from the mentor along with the application which expresses his/ her willingness to guide the applicant's postdoctoral work**

The financial assistance

- **The tenure of the award is three years with no provision for further extension**
- **The Post Doctoral Fellowship comprises a monthly grant @Rs.38,500/- plus 10% H.R.A for the first year, @Rs.41,500/- plus 10% H.R.A for the second year, and @Rs.46,500/- plus 10% H.R.A for the third year; and an annual contingent grant @Rs.50,000/- plus Rs. 20,000/- as a travel grant.**
- **The fellowship also covers Escorts/Reader assistance @ Rs. 2,000/- per mensum (fixed) in cases of a Person with a disability.**

Thrust Areas of Ujjwal Postdoctoral Research

Under this Programme, proposals may be considered in the following thrust areas or according to the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the commissioned proposals or by the

requirement of DoECC in serving the policy/planning needs of the State.

- **Climate change monitoring and evaluation**
- **Climate change impact on Health, Fisheries, Water Resources, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Forest and Biodiversity, Soil, Transportation, Tourism and Industry, Coastal and Wetland ecosystems**
- **Climate Change Economics and Modeling**
- **Climate change Mitigation/Adaptation**
- **Risk Assessment and Vulnerability Analysis**
- **Projection models on water scarcity, drought, heat waves, etc.**
- **Vegetation dynamics and climate change**
- **Range shift of fauna with emphasis on amphibians, birds, and butterflies due to climate change.**
- **Climate change responses of invasive species**
- **Forest type wise carbon stock assessment of Kerala**

Selection Criteria

The application shall be submitted in the given format with a detailed project proposal, timelines and milestones, expected output, and outcome.

***Screening*: The applications will be examined by the Directorate to determine whether or not they conform to one or more of the identified thrust areas of the Directorate. Weak, incomplete, diffused, repetitive, and/or superfluous proposal(s) will be rejected at this stage.**

***Evaluation and Selection*: The applicants, whose proposals are found feasible and complete in all respects, will be invited to present before the Technical Committee. Selection of the proposals received will be based solely on the technical evaluation of the proposals and the implementing credentials of the proposed researcher. No TA/DA will be paid to the Applicant for attending the interview/presentation**

The review committee should, inter alia, assess the following:

a. **Expected and other physical output and outcome of the project**
b. **Cost-benefit analysis in terms of the physical outputs and environmental benefits**
c. **Minimum required tenure of the project**
d. **Modalities for replication of the outputs**
e. **No duplication with completed/existing/ongoing projects**

Approval and Sanction: **The Directorate would endeavour to complete the award appraisal cycle within three to six months of receipt of the invited and commissioned proposals. Based upon the recommendations of the Technical Committee, and as per the availability of funds under the scheme, the Fellowship shall be awarded. The applicant has to submit a consent letter and willingness to undertake the project with the sanctioned fellowship and objectives. A formal Award Letter will be released upon receipt of the consent letter.**

After the issue of the sanction order and subsequent execution of a tri-party agreement, the administration will take steps to effect the payment. Copies of the Proceedings regarding the issuance of funds will be sent to the Postdoctoral Fellow, Mentor, and all concerned.

Release of Funds

The applicant institution will need to execute a tri-party agreement undertaking as acceptance of the terms and conditions for providing facilities to the Postdoctoral Fellow as per the guidelines and conditions prescribed. After receipt of the undertaking, the first-year installment of funds will be released to the PSTSB account of the Host Institution. While the first year installment will be released as envisaged above, subsequent ones will be released on request, and the appraisal of the Annual Progress Report by the Technical Committee of DoECC and submission of Utilization Certificate (in KFC Form 44) and detailed Expenditure Statement of the funds released. Total funds will be released in 5 installments (in the order of yearly basis for the 1st two installments, half yearly basis for the third installment, and quarterly for the last 2 installments) according to the progress of research and recommendations by the Technical Review Committee. Before requesting the 4th installment, the Fellow has to submit a draft Technical Report before the Technical committee for evaluation. The last installment wil be released only upon receipt of the Final Technical Report and its appraisal by the Screening/ Evaluation Committee, based on their recommendations.

All correspondence is to be adressed to

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Terms and Conditions

Directorate of Environment & Climate Change will be read as 'DoECC'

1. **The Postdoctoral Fellowship will normally be sanctioned for a maximum period of three years.**
2. **After receiving the Award Letter from the DoECC, the candidate shall submit a tri-party agreement in Stamp Paper worth Rs. 200/- between the candidate, Research Institution and DoECC, duly countersigned by the Mentor and Head of the Institution. The candidate has to submit a joining report (in prescribed format) forwarded through the Mentor, Head of the Department, and Registrar of the University/ Head of the Institution to the DoECC.**
3. **The selected post doctoral fellow will be eligible for a monthly post doctoral fellowship of Rs. 38,500/- plus 10% H.R.A for the first year, @Rs.41,500/- plus 10% H.R.A for the second year, and @ Rs.46,500/- plus 10% H.R.A for the third year; and an annual contingent grant @ Rs.50,000/- plus Rs. 20,000/- as travel grant. The fellowship also covers Escorts/Reader assistance @ Rs. 2,000/- per mensum (fixed) in cases of a person with disability.**
4. **The post-doctoral fellow should join a suitable national/ state R&D institution or University departments in Kerala and should work with a scientist/ mentor who is a permanent employee of the institution.**
5. **The postdoctoral work should be undertaken in a place different from where the candidate has carried out his/her Doctoral studies, and the PhD guide of the candidate cannot be chosen as his/her mentor for this programme. The candidate has to submit a consent letter from the mentor stating his/her willingness to guide the PDF fellow.**
6. **The post-doctoral fellow should submit an undertaking from the institution that the institute will extend all infrastructure & laboratory facilities to the**

fellow for the successful completion of the project.

7. The fellow should publish at least one research paper in a peer-reviewed journal before commencing the third year of the project.
8. Fellowship will be released in advance in a lump sum each year through the Host Institution (their treasury account) in which the research is carried out .The Institution has to maintain a separate Plan Scheme Treasury Savings Bank Account (PSTSB) for this purpose mentioned . The fund should be utilized only for the purpose for which it has been sanctioned. The date of the start of the fellowship will be calculated from the date on which the fund is transferred from DoECC to the institution.
9. The amount should be drawn by the Institution/Authority responsible and released to the Fellow only on a monthly basis. A separate cashbook should be maintained for this purpose by the institution, which should be made available for scrutiny of DoECC or any agency deputed by the DoECC. Receipt and Expenditure relating to the fellowship should be entered in the Cash Book simultaneously with the transactions. The designation of the Drawing and Disbursing Officer of the institution shall be informed to DoECC. Balance amount with interest accrued if any in the account shall be mentioned in the Utilization Certificate (in KFC Form 44) and will be adjusted against future release. Un-utilized amount at the completion/termination of fellowship will be refunded with interest to the Government.
10. Annual progress reports containing the technical/scientific details of the work accomplished shall be submitted and presented at the end of each year before the Technical Committee for review. The release of subsequent instalments of the fellowship grant by the DoECC shall be subject to the recommendation of the Technical Committee based on satisfactory progress, and upon receipt of the required documents, namely the detailed Statement of Expenditure and Utilization Certificate (in KFC Form 44) from the Head of the Institution (in the case of Government/Aided/University institutions) and an audited detailed Statement of Expenditure in the case of private institutions. Upon completion of the fellowship tenure, the Fellow shall submit the financial documents for the entire period of the fellowship to DoECC.
11. The fellowship will be purely on contract basis and will not be eligible for any service benefits. The scholars will be required to complete the post-doctoral research programme within a period of three years. Extension for a maximum period of one year will be considered without financial assistance for exceptionally good candidates on case by case basis. For that the candidate shall submit the request at least 6 months prior to the completion of 3 years.

12. **Those who violate the Terms and Conditions have to repay the total amount received during the tenure with 18% interest.**
13. **Leave for a maximum period of 30 days in a year in addition to public holidays may be availed of by the Postdoctoral Fellow with the approval of the mentor and Head of the Department. Women candidates are eligible for maternity leave with full pay up to 180 days as per the Government of India rules, once during the tenure of their award. The Fellow, in exceptional cases may be allowed by the DoECC, leave without fellowship and contingency, for a period not exceeding six months during the tenure of award on request with the recommendation of the mentor and Head of Department and the Institution concerned. The period of leave without fellowship will be counted as a part of the tenure.**
14. **Research scholars availing any other source of Scholarship/ stipend from other State/ Central funding agencies or international agencies will not be simultaneously eligible for 'Ujjwal' Fellowship. The research scholar should furnish an undertaking to the effect that he/she is not availing stipend/ fellowship from any other source simultaneously.**
15. **On completion of the tenure of fellowship, the post-doctoral fellow has to submit the detailed final technical report of the research work done during the entire period of fellowship and the audited consolidated statement of expenditure and Utilisation Certificate ((in KFC Form 44) to DoECC at the earliest. And in no case later than 6 months as on the completion of project. Any unutilized amount on completion/ termination of the programme should be refunded with interest to the government of Kerala.**
16. **The post-doctoral Fellow shall not discontinue his/her fellowship without prior approval of DoECC. If the Fellow has an intention to resign the Fellowship programme, he/she has to submit a request in writing his/her intention to resign, with all details to the DoECC and wait for reply. Up on acceptance of his/ her resignation by DoECC, the candidate has to submit his/her final report with utilization certificate to the DoECC according to the terms and conditions and as per the tri-party agreement. The fellowship shall cease from the date stipulated in the letter approving the resignation. The research fellows who thus resigned must submit the detailed consolidated report of the research work already done during the period of fellowship with copy of papers published/ presented if any, and audited financial statements through the mentor to DoECC, within one month of accepting the resignation, failing which, shall be entitled to repay the releases/ grants with interest to Govt. of Kerala.**

17. **The post-doctoral fellow should inform DoECC about the publication of any research paper arising out of the Post-doctoral research work done during the tenure of the fellowship.**
18. **Due acknowledgement of the Directorate of Environment and Climate Change (DoECC), Government of Kerala, MUST BE given in all the publications and Research papers emanating from the research work besides the Final Technical Report submitted in fulfillment of Ujjwal Postdoctoral Fellowship.**
19. **In the case of projects commissioned by DoECC, copyright of the whole project document shall be the property of DoECC, Government of Kerala.**
20. **In respect of particular research/action oriented projects, at the time of sanction, DoECC may prescribe requirements of its prior approval before submitting the results for publication or conference presentation, papers or articles based on the Project.**
21. **In general, a change in mentor/workplace is discouraged. However, Ujjwal Postdoctoral Fellows who have completed at least 6 months of tenure at accepted work place is eligible to apply for a change of the workplace/Mentor. In such a case, the Fellow has to lodge a formal request with the DoECC and wait for the reply. The application must furnish the following set of documents:**

    a. **No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the current Mentor.**
    b. **Consent letter from the proposed Mentor showing willingness to work on the previously sanctioned proposal.**
    c. **Brief CV of the newly proposed Mentor as per format complied by Ujjwal Programme.**
    d. **Summary of the work done during Ujjwal tenure with the previous Mentor.**

    The Director, DoECC will be the final Authority for making the decision.

22. **If for unforeseen reasons, the scientist/ mentor have to discontinue from the project assignment during the duration of the project, association of an in-service scientist/ faculty should be ensured by the head of the institution. Any such cases of alternate arrangement should be informed to the DoECC well in advance & a copy of the bio-data of the faculty/ scientist should be forwarded to the DoECC.**
23. **The Fellows can join within 60 days from the date mentioned on the Award Letter received from DoECC. However, in exceptional situation, Fellows can join within six months. For this, the candidate has to lodge a request with the DoECC and wait for the final decision.**
24. **The candidate is, in general, strongly discouraged to work under the Ph.D.**

thesis Supervisor for PDF.

25. The Fellows, who have not joined the workplace after receiving the Award Letter of the Ujjwal Postdoctoral Fellowship, are eligible to reapply.
26. Regarding financial matters and utilization of contingency grants, the Fellow have to follow the rules of their workplace.
27. The Fellow can purchase minor equipments useful for research such as minor laboratory equipment or laptop costing less than 50,000/-from their contingency budget.
28. During the course of implementation of the project, DoECC may depute its nominee/s to visit the research institution(s) concerned to review progress.
29. In the event, after due enquiry, of any conclusion that the progress of a Postdoctoral research project is highly unsatisfactory and cannot be improved, DoECC will be at liberty to terminate the Fellowship. Upon such termination, full audited accounts and refund of all unspent balances will have to be made promptly to the Agency according the tri-party agreement.
30. All equipment and stores purchased out of the grant would remain with the institution concerned unless otherwise specified in the sanction. However, the grantee organization will submit the list of assets acquired under the programme. The terms "Assets" here means (a) immovable property and (b) movable property of a capital nature where the value exceeds Rs.10,000/-
31. The projects will be sanctioned normally for a specified period (maximum three years). Extension may be granted in exceptional cases up to a maximum period of one year with no additional financial inputs. Any request for extension of the project shall be sent by the Fellow to DoECC through proper channel at least three months before the closing date. The Fellow shall not make any expenditure after the closing date without specific approval of the DoECC till the extension is conveyed to him/her.
32. Sharing of Intellectual Property Rights of the programme would be specified in the sanction order based on Guidelines of the CSIR.
33. The Principal Investigator shall submit one hard copy and a soft copy of the progress report of the project at the end of each year to DoECC for Annual Review of the project.
34. The grantee organization(s) shall submit to the Directorate of Environment and Climate Change (DoECC) one hard copy and a soft copy of the Final Technical Report, including an Executive Summary. The grantee shall also furnish all relevant digital deliverables such as field photographs, video clips, databases, a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the key findings and outcomes of the project, and any other supporting materials in soft copy.

35. **The Director, DoECC is vested with the powers to modify any of the conditions of the Fellowship, which can also be over ruled by Government.**

Digitally signed by
Suneel Pamidi
Date: 12-05-2026
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