

Guidelines for *Paristhithi poshini* – an Environmental Research Fellowship Programme

Introduction

Directorate of Environment & Climate Change (DoECC) under the Department of Environment is established with an aim to coordinate all the environment and climate change related activities in the State. The Research and Development scheme of DoECC is for promoting research studies on relevant aspects of environmental concerns in the State that could be important in formulating strategies for effective environmental management. The scheme also envisages an **Research Fellowship Programme (*Paristhithiposhini*)** for young researchers (students) who are desirous to work at the forefront of Environment Sciences, Environmental Management, Environmental Engineering, Environmental Economics and Climate Change with a focus on problem solving research studies in regional and global environmental and climate change issues by way of research in Universities, Research Centres/Institutions in Kerala. DoECC will be the nodal agency for inviting, processing and coordinating the research fellowship under this scheme. The objectives of the *Paristhithiposhini* scheme, procedures for inviting/receipt and processing proposals for funding, norms for funding, conditions of support and dissemination of research findings, etc are summarized as follows:

Scope and Objectives of the programme

Paristhithiposhini - the Environmental Research Fellowship Programme will encourage most promising young researchers after completing MSc/MPhil/MTech to do cutting edge research on critical issues related to the Environment and Climate Change. The fellowship will involve full-time research work for 3 years, leading to PhD degree in relevant subject areas.

Objectives

- To strengthen the capacity and to encourage the young researchers to undertake research in regional and global environmental issues for developing strategies, technologies and methodologies for better environmental management of the State.
- To study and find practical solutions for the local problems in environment and climate change aspects and to support the on-site application of such innovations for the environmental improvement of the State.
- To develop and demonstrate the models suitable for environmental conservation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, etc at local level

- To generate scientific information for the formulation of policy decisions relating to environmental concerns of the State.

Subject/ Thrust areas of Fellowship

***Paristhithi poshini* research fellowship will be preferred but not limited to the topics given below:**

1. Floral and faunal assessment of selected wetlands in Kerala.
2. Green house gas trend analysis and climate financing models.
3. Dependency analysis of major Wetlands.
4. Water balance/ hydrological analysis of major wetlands. Impact of land use changes on the water regimes.
5. Long term shoreline changes along the Kerala coast and coastal protection measures.
6. Numerical model studies on the effect of coastal protection measures in Kerala coast.
7. Coastal Land use changes and impacts, Coastal pollution management.
8. Blue economy assessment & marine spatial planning.

Who is Eligible?

To be eligible, an applicant must:

- i) Be a native of Kerala
- ii) Students who have completed the five year integrated M.Sc./M.Tech or five year undergraduate – post graduate dual degree programmes or two year regular M.Sc. programmes in Environmental Sciences / Environmental Management / Environmental Studies/ Environmental Engineering/ Environmental Economics/ Disaster Management/ Earth Science/ Atmospheric Science/ Climatology from any of the recognized universities in India.
- iii) Have secured a minimum of 60% marks in aggregate for the qualifying degree.
- iv) Have the eligibility to register for PhD programme or have registered for full time Ph.D. in any of the recognized Academic Institutions/R&D Institutions in Kerala.
- v) Age should not have exceeded 35 years of age as on 1st January of the year of inviting application for fellowships.

Duration of Fellowship

The fellowship shall involve full time research for a period not exceeding three years. An extension period of two years will be considered under special circumstances, without any financial assistance and shall be decided case to case merits by the Director of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Kerala, subject to the approval of University or Research Institution.

Fellowship

Applicants, who fulfill the eligibility criteria and are finally selected through a selection process, will be offered a fellowship of Rs. 22,000/- per month for the first two years and Rs. 25000/- for the 3rd year. Apart from this, the fellowship will also carry 10% HRA and an annual contingency grant of Rs. 20,000/-. 25% of 3rd year fellowship will be released only after the submission of approved Thesis and the PhD Certificate (Provisional). There will be a rigorous review of the performance of Research Fellowship holders in each year and continuation of the next year fellowship shall be contingent upon successful review.

Mode of Selection

The eligible candidates will be shortlisted based on an Aptitude Test and finally get selected after personal interview. If the number of applicants is less, the candidates will be selected on the basis of personal interview.

How to Apply

Eligible candidates shall submit the application in the prescribed format published in the Directorate website (<https://envt.kerala.gov.in/>). Duly filled application form along with attested copies of certificates & eligibility for Research by a Gazetted Officer, Order of Ph.D. registration or Consent from Research Guide or an Institute, synopsis of the proposed research work (max. 2 pages) should be send to the following address:

The Director,
Directorate of Environment and Climate Change,
IV Floor, KSRTC Terminal Complex,
Thampanoor, Thiruvananthapuram - 695001

The application should clearly mention the correspondence address, contact number and e-mail ID of the applicant. Incomplete application in any means will be rejected without any notification.

Terms and Conditions

- i) The awardees must register for a full-time PhD Programme in any of the recognized Institutions in Kerala, or must be qualified for doing research. If the candidate is already registered for PhD programme, the Research Guide and the Head of the Institution shall intimate the status of registration (Date of Registration, Title and Synopsis of the Work, Particulars of Research Centre, Details of any other financial support, if any, etc) to DoECC. In such cases the fellowship shall be limited to the remaining years pending as per the university/institution norms.
- ii) Unregistered qualified candidate should register their PhD in any recognized research institution within 6 months from the date of receipt of selection order.
- iii) On receipt of the selection order of fellowship, the candidate should submit a tri-party agreement in a stamp paper worth Rs. 200/- among the Candidate, Research Institution (Research Guide and Head of Institution) and Director, DoECC.
- iv) On satisfactory receipt of the tri-party agreement, the candidate shall be awarded fellowship in writing and then only the fellowship will be confirmed.
- v) Fellowship will be released in advance in lump sum each year through the institution in which the research is carried out. The fund should be utilized only for the purpose for which it has been sanctioned. The date of start of the fellowship will be calculated from the date on which the fund is transferred from DoECC to the institution. The date of initiation shall be intimated to DoECC within 10 days from the receipt of the fund.
- vi) The Fellowship will be released in advance in lump sum each year through the Institution/ University in which the research is carried out (i) through the University/ Institution's (Plan Scheme Treasury Savings Bank Account aka PSTSB) in which the research is carried out. The Institution has to start and maintain a Plan Scheme Treasury Savings Bank Account (PSTSB), (if no PSTSB account already available) for this purpose mentioned (i) above. The fund should be utilized only for the purpose for which it has been sanctioned. The interest accrued if any will have to be reflected in the statement of expenditure, which will be adjusted from the subsequent year's grant. The date of effect of fellowship shall be the date of release of 1st year of grant/ fellowship and first year shall be calculated from the effective date that is the date of Demand Draft releasing the initial grant.

- vii) A progress report of the work along with papers published/presented if any in every six months with the remarks of the Research Guide and Head of Institution where they are undertaking research shall be submitted.
- viii) In addition, annual progress reports with technical/scientific details of the work accomplished shall be submitted at the end of each year through proper channel. The subsequent installments will be disbursed by DoECC only after receiving satisfactory progress reports, statement of expenditure & Utilization Certificate (in KFC Form 44) from the Head of institution (for Govt./Aided/University) and Chartered Accountant in the case of private institution. On completion of the tenure of fellowship, the research fellow must send the all financial documents for the entire period of fellowship to the DoECC.
- ix) The fellowship will be purely on contract basis and will not be eligible for any service benefits. The scholars shall complete their research programme leading to PhD within a period of three years. An extension for a maximum period of two years will be considered without any 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.
- x) There will be review of the performance of Research Fellowshipholders and continuation of the next year fellowship shall be contingent upon successful review. Those who violate the conditions have to repay the total amount received during the fellowship period with 18% interest.
- xi) Research scholars availing scholarship/stipend from other State/Central funding programmes/agencies or international agencies will not be simultaneously eligible for PARISTHITHI POSHINI fellowship. The research scholar should furnish an undertaking to the effect that he/she is not availing any stipend/fellowship from any other source simultaneously. Any breach in the condition is a legal cause of action and DoECC will take stringent action against such violators.
- xii) No research fellow shall discontinue his/her research fellowship without prior approval of DoECC. In case he/she wishes to discontinue the fellowship prior to completion of the tenure, he/she must submit the resignation to the DoECC through the Research Guide / Head of Institution, indicating specific reason for not continuing the fellowship. 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 Research Guide / Head of Institution to DoECC, within one month of accepting the resignation. In case of violation, the candidate shall be entitled to repay the released grants with interest to Govt. of Kerala.

- xiii) In case the research scholar is shifting to another institution for the betterment of work/ more facilities/any other valid reasons, the fellowship shall be transferred to new institution with mutual consent of both the institutions and approved research guides. The research scholar shall submit the transfer request to the DoECC with the consent of research guides/institutions to facilitate such transfer. The research fellows/research guides/institutions shall not have any authority to transfer the fund without the consent from DoECC.
- xiv) In case, the research scholar is debarred from the institution on valid reasons, the fellowship shall cease from the date of termination and the institution shall intimate the Directorate about the termination and shall take necessary steps to of refund the balance amount to the Government after the approval from DoECC.
- xv) The research fellow shall inform DoECC about the submission of thesis for Ph.D and submission/publication of any research paper arising out of the research work done during the tenure of the fellowship. Two copies of the final approved thesis and the Ph.D Certificate (provisional) must be submitted to the DoECC within one month of the award of the Ph.D degree.
- xvi) The Directorate of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Kerala **MUST BE** duly acknowledged in all the publications and Research paper emanating from the research work, besides the thesis submitted in fulfillment of research.
- xiv) The Director of DoECC is vested with the powers to modify any of the conditions of the fellowship, which can also be over ruled by Government.