SEED GRANT POLICY FOR FACULTY

2022-23

Office of Research & Development (R&D)

Vignan's Foundation for Science, Technology and Research

(Deemed to be University), Vadlamudi, Guntur-522213

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Preamble

The Seed Grant Policy of Vignan's Foundation for Science, Technology and Research (VFSTR) is designed to stimulate competitive research in strategic areas of national or international importance, to promote innovative product and technology development, and/or to facilitate the start of research programs which will potentially develop into creative ventures on their own through external funding. Seed Grant scheme will run till 31st March of every year. This provision is extended to all the regular faculty members of VFSTR under following schemes:

- **Research startup grant for Assistant Professors (RSG):** RSG is awarded for newly recruited faculty under Assistant Professor category to initiate their research work at VFSTR.
- **Follow up research grant for Assistant Professors (FRG):** FRG is awarded for faculty under Assistant Professor category, who has availed and successfully completed RSG. This scheme is meant to continue their research work at VFSTR.
- **Support research grant for Associate Professors and Professors (SRG):** SRG is awarded for faculty in the position of Associate Professor and Professor. This scheme is intended to support faculty who are interested to initiate their research work or change his / her research area according to the thrust area of the department.
- **Exclusive research grant for women faculty (ERG):** Regular women faculty in any cadre can apply under this scheme to receive funds either for initiating or extending their research work at VFSTR.

Objectives

1. To aid faculty members to strengthen his / her research work that has the potential to sustain by attracting funds from external agencies.
2. To support faculty who are interested to change his / her research area according to the thrust area of the department.
3. To test a novel idea and to generate preliminary results before submitting proposals to external agencies.
4. To promote inter-school / inter-departmental collaboration in emerging areas.
5. To promote generation of IPR and product / process development.
6. To attract and retain scientific merit.

Awards

1. Grants shall be awarded with a maximum value of **Rs. 5 Lakhs.**
2. The duration of the Grant will be maximum for **2 years**. It could be extended by another year after a complete review of the outcomes / deliverables.

Eligibility

1. Any faculty member of VFSTR holding a Ph.D. degree with a proven track record of quality research and employed in VFSTR for at least one semester
2. Any group comprising VFSTR faculty, Ph.D. scholars, undergraduates, and post-doctoral fellows belonging to VFSTR. Participation by students of any category is encouraged but they may be named only as personnel in the project.

Application process

1. The call for proposals may limit research funding to the Departmental / School thrust area.
2. Plagiarism free proposals should be submitted for short-listing. A full proposal including figures and references should not exceed more than 7 pages.
3. The full proposals will be reviewed by "**Committee for Institute Funded Research (CIFR)"**
4. The investigator will be invited to make a presentation before the selection committee. (Refer to "assessment")
5. Decision on the grant award will be announced.

Submission deadline

Research proposals are invited throughout the year and all received applications will be processed twice in a year. A decision will be made within 2-3 weeks of the submission deadline of the application.

Selection criteria

1. Innovative interdisciplinary research focusing on the in-depth study of the departmental thrust area.
2. Team of faculty members whose expertise is complimentary.
3. Promise of sustainable research and development attracting external funds / industrial collaboration.
4. Budget matches the claimed outcomes.

5. Potential to generate intellectual property (Including product and process development).

Assessment

Proposals will be assessed by the CIFR Committee considering the following criterion:

1. The proposal is from the faculty (Assistant Professor / Associate Professor / Professor as per scheme) with Ph.D. degree focusing on the thrust area of the department.
2. CIFR Committee would comprise of following members:

a)	School Dean	-	Chairman
b)	Head of the Department	-	Member
c)	Research Advisor / Senior Faculty	-	Member
d)	Dean R&D / Dean R&D nominee	-	Member
e)	External expert	-	SRB Member
f)	Department BoR member	-	Member Secretary

3. The proposal will be rated for intellectual merit and its broader impact.
4. The CIFR Committee may if required, discuss proposals with R&D Division, and may seek further information from the investigator before making a final decision.
5. The proposal evaluation will consider the alignment of the budget with the deliverables.

Based upon the merit of the proposal and number of faculty, the committee may award an amount greater than **Rs. 5 Lakhs.**

Conditions

1. RSG and FRG should be applied only by the Assistant Professors. Any faculty in the cadre higher than Assistant Professor associated with the project will be considered as mentor, rather than investigator.
2. The decision of the CIFR committee will be conveyed to the investigator who will be the contact person for all administrative matters regarding the project.
3. The investigator is responsible for the conduct of the research in accordance with the institute research policy.
4. Procurement, utilization and maintenance of equipment should be as per institute policy.

5. The seed grant money has to be utilized within the stipulated period in accordance with the approved budget.
6. Once in every six months, investigator should make a presentation of work progress in front of CIFR committee for assessment. In case it is found that proper efforts are not being made, further release of funding may be ceased.
7. At the end of first year (during 2nd review meeting), a progress report containing information about cumulative 1st year need to be furnished.
8. At the end of second year (during 4th review meeting), a progress report containing information about complete two years need to be furnished.
9. In any research communication that arises out of the funded project, the contribution of the institute should be duly acknowledged along with the sanction order number of the seed grant.
10. The investigator need to submit UC & SE at the end of every financial year (i.e., 31st March).
11. The investigator will also be required to submit project outcomes (including grants received from external funding agencies and publication/IPR arising out of the seed grant) by the end of third year from the sanctioned date of seed grant. The investigator should stay in VFSTR at least up to 6 months after third year.
12. Before the completion of the project, investigator should prepare a research proposal for submitting to external funding agency. Further, investigator should identify plan of action to collaborate with Industries / MNC's to obtain consultancy projects.
13. After investigator fulfills all the requirements, **Seed Grant Project Closure Report** will be sanctioned by the office of Dean R&D.
14. The seed grant will be discontinued in the absence of investigator / investigators for more than 30 days of unsanctioned leave and in such case investigator will have to return the seed grant money. If the leave is taken due to unforeseen health condition, then investigator may get special permission to continue the seed grant.
15. Under any unforeseen emergency, if one of the investigators leaves the institute before the completion of project, other investigator may assume responsibility.

16. In case the project is handled by only one investigator, if he / she wants to resign without completion of seed grant project, a punitive action may be taken against the investigator by VFSTR administration.
17. In case of Maternity Leave, investigator will be given special permission to extend their project after joining duty. However, prior permission is required in such cases.

Expected Deliverables

1. Externally funded projects including the grants from Government funding agencies / Industries / Corporates as outcome of seed grant scheme.
2. Publication in peer-reviewed journals / intellectual property generation including product / process development would be expected as outcomes of the project. Further, it is understood that any IP emerging out of research funded by VFSTR will be owned by VFSTR. Such IPR will recognize contributions by all researchers as "inventors", and any resulting royalties will be shared by VFSTR with the inventors.

List of Annexures

- Application Form
- Assessment Proforma
- Declaration from the Investigator
- Progress Report
- Utilization Certificate
- Statement of Expenditure

Prepared by

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Associate Dean, R&D

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Approved by

(Dr. G. Srinivasa Rao)
Dean, R&D

Office of the Dean-Research & Development
VFSTR University

(Cmde. Dr. MS Raghunathan)
Registrar

REGISTRAR
VIGNAN'S FOUNDATION
FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH
(Deemed to be University)
VADLAMUDI-522 213
GUNTUR (DISTRICT), A.P. INDIA

VIGNAN'S Foundation for Science, Technology & Research (Deemed to be University) -Estd. u/s 3 of UGC Act 1956	**OFFICE OF DEAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT**

Annexure - I
Application Form

Proposal Application Form	**Date:**	**Application no.: (Official Use)**

Funding Scheme	Research startup grant for Assistant Professors/ Follow up research grant for Assistant Professors/ Support research grant for Associate Professors and Professors/ Exclusive research grant for women
Funding Agency	VFSTR
Title of proposed project	
Duration (not to exceed two years)	
Amount (not to exceed Rs. 5 lakhs)	
Investigator 1	
Name and Employ ID	
Designation	
Highest qualification	
School name	
Department name	
Contact number	Mobile :
Contact email address	
Investigator 2	
Name and Employ ID	
Designation	
Highest qualification	
School name	

Department name	
Contact number	Mobile :
Contact email address	

Note : Application form should be restricted to maximum of 7 pages

1. Background

1.1 Description of problem

1.2 Review of work already done

1.3 Rational for taking up the project

2. Description of Proposal

2.1 Objectives of the project (Brief and to the point)

2.2 Preliminary Investigations done (if any)

2.3 Innovative component of the project

2.4 Methodology detailing stepwise activities and sub-activities

3. Work Plan

Phase-wise plan of action upto post project activities detailing time schedule. Milestone may clearly be indicated. PERT/ GANTT chart may be attached.

4. Output and Deliverables of the Project

Attempt may be made to quantify output in measurable parameters.

5. Likely Impact (Please attempt to quantify)

6. Parameters for monitoring effectiveness of project

7. Suggested Post Project Activities

8. Publications for the last five years

9. Budget estimate (in Rupees): Summary*

	Heads of Expenditure	1st year	2nd year	Total
A	**Recurring**			
1	Consumable			
2	Travel (with in India)			
3	Contingencies (up to 5%)			
4	Other cost			
B	**Non-Recurring (Minor Equipment only)**			
	Detailed break up			
C	**Grand Total (A+B)**			

*Please provide brief justification for each head of expenditure.

*Expenditure under 'Travel head' should be according to the 'TA&DA Rules' dated 01.01.2023 of VFSTR (Maximum 10% of sanctioned grant)

(Signature of School Dean) **(Signature of HoD)** **(Signature of Investigator)**

Enclosures: Detailed CV of the Investigators

To

The Dean, R&D,
VFSTR.

Annexure - II

ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

Name and Department of the Investigator 1:

Name and Department of the Investigator 2:

Name of the scheme: Research startup grant for Assistant Professors/ Follow up research grant for Assistant Professors/ Support research grant for Associate Professors and Professors/ Exclusive research grant for women

Title of the Project:

1.	Does the proposal fit into Department's thrust area?	Yes/No
2.	Does the proposal fit into Investigator's area of expertise?	Yes/No
3.	Has the Investigator published at least 1 article in SCI journals relevant to the proposed area after his Ph.D.?	Yes/No
4.	If yes, list out the publications along with indexing and their impact factor	
5.	Is the proposal put forward individually / interdepartmental / interschool ?	
6.	Is the minor equipment proposed in the grant available existing in the University? Provide the justification for the purchase of the equipment, if it already exists?	
7.	Are the time lines appropriate for execution of the proposed work?	Yes/No
8.	Does the proposal address societal needs?	Yes/No
9.	Uniqueness of the proposal (Minimum 100 words in bullets)	

10.	Strengths of the proposal (Minimum 100 words in bullets)	
11.	Weakness of the proposal (Minimum 100 words in bullets)	
12.	Based on the proposed work plan, can the investigator achieve proposed outcomes?	Yes/No
13.	Rate the proposal on 10 scale wherein '1' is poor and '10' being strong	
14.	Recommended / Not Recommended	

Budget: Approved

S. No.	Item	Amount Sanctioned (INR)		
		1st Year	2nd Year	Total
1	Minor equipment			
2	Consumables			
3	Travel			
4	Contingency			
5	Other cost			
	Total			

	Name	**Signature and Date**
School Dean		
Head of the Department		
Research Advisor / Senior Faculty		

Annexure - III

DECLARATION FROM THE INVESTIGATOR

Name of the scheme: Research startup grant for Assistant Professors/ Follow up research grant for Assistant Professors/ Support research grant for Associate Professors and Professors/ Exclusive research grant for women

Project Title:

It is certified that

- I do hereby agree to submit a complete proposal for financial support to the external funding agency within the time period of Seed Grant Project.
- I undertake that spare time on equipment procured in the project will be made available to other users.
- I agree to abide by the terms and conditions of Seed grant policy, VFSTR.

	Name of Faculty	Signature with date
Investigator 1		
Investigator 2		

Signature with date
School Dean

Signature with date
Head of the Department

VIGNAN'S Foundation for Science, Technology & Research (Deemed to be University) -Estd. u/s 3 of UGC Act 1956	**OFFICE OF DEAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT**

Annexure – IV

PROGRESS REPORT

(Interim / Complete)

Name of the Scheme:			**Report no.**
1	**Title of the project:**		**Sanction order no:**
2	**Investigator 1 (Name & affiliation):**		**Investigator 2 (Name & affiliation):**
3	**Thrust area of Research:**		
4	**Approved Objectives of the Proposal:**		
Date of Commencement:			**Total cost of SEED grant: Rs.**
Date of First report			**Expenditure amount Rs.----------** **---as on: / / (DD/MM/YY)**
Date of Second report			
Date of Third report			
Date of Fourth report			
Date of completion:			**Balance amount: Rs.**
Encl.: (Registrar proceedings/ purchase orders/ bills etc)			

-
-
-

5	**Summary of Progress / achievements**
Innovative Resources: (Please list any unusual datasets, statistical techniques or innovative algorithms that you developed as part of this project.)	
Proposal submission plan: Tell us your plan for submitting a grant proposal, including an estimated date and the anticipated funding agency mechanism	

6	**Bottlenecks in execution (if any)**

Name and registered no. of the Students involved: ▪ ▪ ▪	**Name and registered no. of the Ph.D. scholar involved:** ▪ ▪ ▪

No. of paper publications arising out of the grant		**No. of conference publications arising out of the grant**	

List of paper publications from this Project (including author(s), title, journal, year, Indexing (SCOPUS/ SCI/SCI-E)

- ▪
- ▪
- ▪
- ▪

List of conference publications from this Project

- ▪
- ▪
- ▪

Patents filed/ to be filed:

Minor Equipment (Model and Make)					
S.No.	**Sanctioned list**	**Procured (Yes/ No) Model & make**	**Cost (Rs in lakhs)**	**Working (Yes/ No)**	**Utilization Rate (%)**

Signature of Investigator 1 **Signature of Investigator 2**

Signature of HoD **Signature of School Dean**

Encl.: (Proof for Publications/ Conferences/ Patents)

-
-
-
-

Note: Two copies of the documents should be prepared. One copy with INVESTIGATOR & one copy with Office of R&D

Annexure – V

UTILIZATION CERTIFICATE

- Registrar's Proceedings/ Order No. and date of sanctioning the project:
- Name and Designation of Investigator:
- Department:
- Title of the Project:
- Total Project Cost:
- Date of Commencement of Project:
- Date of Completion of Project:

Certified that the seed grant of Rs. ……
(Rupees……..…….. only) received from the Vignan's Foundation for Science, Technology and Research, has been utilized for the purpose for which it was sanctioned and in accordance with the terms and conditions laid down by the VFSTR.

Signature of the Investigator

Signature of Finance Officer, VFSTR

Note: Utilization certificate need to be submitted for each financial year during the seed grant tenure.

VIGNAN'S Foundation for Science, Technology & Research (Deemed to be University) -Estd. u/s 3 of UGC Act 1956	**OFFICE OF DEAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT**
Annexure – VI	**STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE**

Name of the scheme:	
Registrar's Proceedings/ Order No. and date of sanctioning the project:	Name, Designation and Department of Investigator:
Total Project Cost:	Title of the Project:
Date of Commencement of Project:	Date of Completion of Project:

S. No.	Sanctioned Heads	Funds Sanctioned	Expenditure incurred		Total Expenditure	Balance (if any)	Requirement of funds for the next year
			1st year	2nd year			
1.	Minor equipment (list out individual equipment)						
2.	Consumables						
3.	Travel						
4.	Contingency						
5.	Other cost						

Signature of the Investigator Signature of Finance Officer, VFSTR

Note: Statement of Expenditure certificate need to be submitted for each financial year during the seed grant tenure.