

NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S GUIDELINES FOR SPONSORING RESEARCH

Scope

Non-recurring assistance may be given for undertaking research studies in the field of human rights. A suggestive list of broad areas for research studies in subjects related to human rights is enclosed (**Annexure-I**). The detailed guidelines for giving financial assistance for research projects will be as follows:

Funds for Research

- (1) Funds for research projects will be made to an institution or a group of institutions for carrying out a specific research project. An institution which is associated in any manner with any aspect of protection and promotion of human rights with good track record and which is not run for profit, shall be eligible to be considered for entrusting the research project, such as:
 1. a research and training institution set up and fully funded by the Central Government/State Government/Public Sector Undertaking;
 2. an institution/organisation registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (Act XXI of 1860);
 3. a registered public trust;
 4. a registered institution exclusively devoting itself to the espousal of the cause of human rights;
 5. a university or a deemed university;
 6. a State Human Rights Commission.
- (2) *Research Project:* The project should be submitted by the Director/Head of the Institution as follows:
 1. A brief outline of the project indicating objectives, methodology, stages of research work proposed, item-wise budget, number of personnel required, time frame, etc. should be submitted by the Director/Head of the Institution to the Commission.
 2. It should be clearly mentioned whether a similar proposal has been submitted to any other organisation for financial assistance and, if so, whether any assistance is received/expected to be received.
 3. The Project Director shall give a declaration that he/she will undertake and complete the work as per the terms and conditions specified by the Commission.
- (3) The project would be granted to individuals who have ample research experience and would take the responsibility of completing it. However, the grant for the project will be made available to him/her only through the institution which, while forwarding the proposal shall agree to:

1. Administer and manage the finance by opening a separate bank account in the name of the project in any nationalised bank to be operated jointly by the Project Director and one other person nominated by the institution. All funds released by the NHRC will be credited to this account.
 2. Provide accommodation and furniture and other logistic support required for the project.
 3. Make available all its research facilities, such as library and other facilities.
 4. Arrange all other assistance necessary for the project.
 5. Ensure that the project is completed within the specified time.
 6. Also make sure that the funds are utilized for the purpose for which it is sanctioned.
- (4) In addition to the above, the Project Director will enclose a detailed note on the work done so far on the subject and the precise contribution which the research project is expected to make to the existing body of knowledge.
- (5) *Items covered under the Fund:* The following items would be covered under the Fund:
1. Fixed fee/allowance to the minimum required project staff.
 2. Travel undertaken in relation to the project.
 3. Consultancy charges.
 4. Contingency.
 5. Overhead Charges, wherever necessary.
 6. Printing and Publication.
 7. Stationery.

No asset should be generated out of the funds provided by the NHRC for the project. The funds shall be spent exclusively for the purpose for which they are released.

Note: Payment for the work already done before the submission of the research proposal will not be allowed.

- (6) *Time Frame:* The duration of the research study proposed to be conducted should not normally exceed two years.
- (7) *Scrutiny:* Every research proposal submitted to the Commission will be scrutinized and,
- 1.1 After scrutiny of the project the Commission may call for any clarification or suggest modifications therein.
 - 1.2 If the research project satisfies the criteria laid down by the Commission from time to time, the Commission will approve the proposal.

The decision of the Commission to accept or reject the proposal shall be final.

2. The institution receiving funds will confirm in writing that the conditions applied by the Commission are acceptable to it.

3. The institution will maintain separate accounts in respect of the research project. The accounts will remain open to inspection of the Commission or its representative.
- (8) *Release of Funds:* The project will clearly indicate the different stages of implementation of the project along with objectives, activities and the outcome in each phase. The funds will be released in installments depending on the completion of the various phases of the project. The directions of the Commission shall be complied with and the unspent funds available at the time of termination would then have to be refunded to the Commission immediately.
- (9) *Progress Reports:* The Project Director will submit to the Commission progress reports of the project periodically through the Head of the Institution as may be decided by the Commission along with Utilization Certificate of the funds released by that time.
- (10) *Changes in Approved Projects:* The Project Director will have to obtain prior approval of the Commission in case any change is to be made in the research project already approved by the Commission.
- (11) *Termination of the Project:* If the Commission is not satisfied with the progress of the project, or if it finds that its rules are violated in any manner, it reserves the right to terminate the research project without any notice.
- (12) *Final Report:*
 1. The draft final report of the project will be submitted by the Project Director to the Commission (two copies) upon completion of the project period and in no case later than one month thereafter. The draft report will be scrutinized in the Commission and on the basis of that scrutiny, the Commission may suggest some changes. 20 copies of the final report, after incorporating suggestions made by the Commission, if any, should be submitted to the Commission at the earliest. The final report should be comprehensive enough to serve as a definite record and should generally cover the following points:
 - I. The problem studied/objectives.
 - II. Methodology of the study :
 - (a) The design of research.
 - (b) The selection of the universe and the units for study, considerations that governed the selection of the universe, size of the sample and the procedure for the sample drawn.
 - (c) Tools used: detailed account of the exercise of tool construction, special contribution made by the project in devising new tools or sharpening existing ones.
 - (d) Field work: the manner in which field work was conducted including division of labour among the project staff, problems encountered.
 - (e) The schedule of the project.
 - (f) Organisational structure and problems.
 - (g) Methodological gains.

- (h) Limitations of the study.
 - (i) Other observations.
- III. Description and analysis of data.
- IV. Findings and conclusion:
- (a) Summary of findings.
 - (b) Conclusion.
 - (c) Implications for further research.
 - (d) Recommendations.
2. The Project Director will submit, along with the final report, 20 copies of the summary of the report.
3. The report of the research will be the exclusive property of the Commission.
- (13) *Finalisation of Accounts:* When the project is completed the institution will submit a statement of accounts with a Utilization Certificate for the expenditure incurred, within three months of the date of acceptance/clearance of the project report. 15% of the funds shall be released only after full accounts are furnished to the Commission.
- (14) *Conditions for Publication:* NHRC shall have exclusive right over the project report, which shall be mentioned in the report itself. The Commission reserves the exclusive right to publish the final report of the research project financed by it. The Commission will give directions with regard to publication/dissemination of the final report. The Commission's approval shall be necessary to the use of the report/publication in any manner.
- (15) *Preservation of Data:* The institution receiving funds for a project should also submit to the Commission the entire project in a floppy.

ANNEXURE - I

Broad Areas for Undertaking Research in Human Rights

1. Gender Justice :

- 1.1 Collect and analyse the available studies on the conditions of widows in general and in particular, in Mathura, Vrindavan and Varanasi; nature of their human rights violations; review the working of social security programmes for vulnerable sections and in particular for widows and destitute women; review the effectiveness of various plans and programmes and suggest new ones where necessary.
- 1.2 Review the safeguards to protect human rights of women prisoners.
- 1.3 Collect and analyse the available studies on the nature of human rights violations faced by commercial sex workers; causes and remedies; and to evolve comprehensive recommendations for improving their lot.

- 1.4 Domestic violence against women (dowry death/rape/sexual abuse/wife battering etc.); to monitor and evaluate the impact of laws; policies and programmes to protect women; reform of laws; to study entrenched attitudes and stereotypes.
- 1.5 Status of dalit women; special problems/ violence faced by dalit women; evaluate the impact of special protective provisions in the laws.
- 1.6 Female literacy.
- 1.7 Study the implementation of Supreme Court guidelines on sexual harassment across different sectors and to make comprehensive recommendations.
- 1.8 Human rights violations faced by the women in the unorganised sector.

2. Rights of Children :

- 2.1 Child Labour— to monitor and evaluate the impact of policies and programmes designed to eliminate child labour in hazardous industries; undertake State-wise studies on child labour in specific industries; study the child labour in beedi-rolling, silk industry and such other sectors where no studies have been conducted earlier; to monitor the implementation of Supreme Court guidelines; reform of laws and strengthening of enforcement; to study the child labour projects in different States to see which are working and which are not; identifying innovations in rehabilitation of child labourers; sharing of best experiences between States.
- 2.2 Child Prostitution— to evaluate the impact of on-going programmes; identification of steps for better rehabilitation of victims and to strengthen enforcement.
- 2.3 Child Marriages— study the underlying causes, effectiveness of the legislation, weaknesses in enforcement and to make suggestions for better enforcement.
- 2.4 Female Infanticide and Foeticide— review the working of the Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994.
- 2.5 Education of the Girl Child.
- 2.6 Rights of Disabled Children.

3. Custodial Justice :

- 3.1 A systematic study of torture, its implications, methods, attitudes of police personnel and other sections on torture.
- 3.2 Custodial Violence— causes and remedies.
- 3.3 Monitor and evaluate the impact of NHRC's recommendations made since its establishment to stop custodial violence — suggestions for future, working of the NHRC/Supreme Court guidelines to check custodial violence in practice.
- 3.4 Conditions of Juvenile Homes and other Institutions/Homes set-up under different statutes; nature of human rights violations therein.
- 3.5 Protection of Human Rights in Prisons.

3.6 Application of Forensic Science in the Administration of Justice; studying the conditions of Forensic Science Laboratories so as to streamline the criminal justice system.

3.7 Human Rights and Administration of the Criminal Justice System.

4. Health and Human Rights:

4.1 Iron and Iodine Deficiency related Health Problems— to monitor and evaluate the national programme for the control of anaemia, and in particular maternal anaemia; evolving better delivery systems for the supply of iron/folic acid tablets.

4.2 Quality Assurance in Mental Hospitals— to study the implementation of NHRC's recommendations.

4.3 HIV/AIDS and Human Rights— to study emerging trends in the spread of infection, nature of human rights violations faced by those affected/infected by HIV/AIDS; review the laws, policies and programmes on HIV/AIDS in order to secure the protection of rights of victims.

5. Environment and Human Rights:

5.1 Monitor and evaluate Government programmes to check arsenic poisoning of drinking water and flurosis.

5.2 Study of people affected by mega projects and the implementation of rehabilitation programmes in order to evolve recommendations for the protection of human rights of those ousted by mega projects.

5.3 Study the trends in air/water pollution in different States—right to clean air, handling of hazardous, toxic waste and hospital waste.

5.4 Rights of Workers in Hazardous Industries/Mining etc.

5.5 Tribal Rights and Environment.

5.6 Natural Calamities and Rights of People Affected.

6. Review of Laws and Constitutional Provisions:

6.1 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. Is it draconian? What amendments can be suggested to improve the working of the Act?

6.2 Review of the legislation on manual scavenging with a view to secure its effective implementation, eliminate this scourge and rehabilitate those engaged in this profession.

7. Terrorism, Insurgency and Human Rights:

7.1 Impact of militancy on women/children/minorities/environment/education and employment /media/civil and political rights as well as economic, social, cultural rights of civilians in Jammu and Kashmir.

7.2 Study the conditions of detention in Jammu and Kashmir; recommendations for improvement.

7.3 Mental Health Institutions in Jammu and Kashmir.

7.4 Role of Civilian Administration in the Protection of Human Rights in strife-torn areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

- 7.5 Study the underlying causes of human rights violations as a result of insurgency in North East; nature of State response; use of special laws; violations by non-state actors; practical suggestions/recommendations for improvement in the situation.

8. Review of International Instruments and Treaties:

- 8.1 Accession to the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951.
- 8.2 Accession to the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW.
- 8.3 Accession to the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 8.4 Desirability of Accession to the two Optional Protocols to the ICCPR.
- 8.5 Desirability of Accession to the two Optional Protocols additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

9. Human Rights Literacy and Education:

- 9.1 Ascertaining the Status of Human Rights Education in Schools, Colleges and Universities— to evaluate the curriculum in different institutions with a view to evolve standards and to ensure quality.
- 9.2 Furthering Human Rights Education through Non-Formal/Distance Education Mode — effective ways to achieve this objective, spreading legal literacy on the rights, institutions and mechanisms.
- 9.3 Impediments to the Universalisation of Primary Education— possible solutions.

- 10. Bonded Labour**— study the underlying causes, effectiveness of legislation; monitor the implementation of Supreme Court guidelines and NHRC's instructions; evaluate the impact of programmes to eliminate bonded labour; rehabilitation of bonded labourers.

- 11. Status of the Disabled/Aged**— gaps in the protection of their Rights.

- 12. Role of Media in the Protection of Human Rights as well as being a Causative Factor in Human Rights Violations.**

- 13. Role of NGOs in the Protection of Human Rights** — response of civil society in areas of terrorism/insurgency.

- 14. Caste Clashes in Bihar**— causes, consequences and remedies.

- 15. Special Problems faced by Religious Minorities**— working of protective provisions in laws; extent of protection afforded by the Police to minorities.

- 16. Impact of Globalisation/Liberalisation on the Poor/Women/Children.**

- 17. Role of Non-State Actors in Engendering Human Rights Violations (private companies/MNCs/armed groups/underworld/religious leaders).**