

**CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEME OF 'NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP'
FOR
PROVIDING FELLOWSHIP TO SCHEDULED CASTE
STUDENTS TO PURSUE M. Phil. AND Ph. D.**

**GUIDELINES GOVERNING THE AWARD OF FELLOWSHIP
(Effective from 01.04.2020)**



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**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT**

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I. Background

National Fellowship scheme for Scheduled Caste Students, is a Central Sector Scheme introduced during the financial year 2005-06 to provide opportunities to Scheduled Castes students for pursuing higher education leading to M.Phil/Ph.D degrees in Sciences, Humanities and Social Science streams.

II. Objectives:

The objective of the scheme is to provide fellowships in the form of financial assistance to students belonging to SC category to pursue higher studies leading to M.Phil/Ph.D in Science, Humanities, Social Science, in Indian Universities/Institutions/Colleges recognized by University Grants Commission (UGC).

III. Scope of the scheme

The scheme provides for new 2000 Fellowships (1500 Junior Research Fellows for Humanities/ Social Sciences and 500 Junior Research Fellows for Science stream) per year to such Scheduled Caste students to undertake advanced studies and research leading to M.Phil/ Ph.D Degrees, who have qualified in the following tests:

- i) National Eligibility Test- Junior Research Fellowship (NET-JRF) of UGC or
- ii) UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) NET-JRF joint test.)

These 2000 slots are over and above the number of SC students selected under the normal reservation policy of the Government for

UGC Fellowships. The scheme is implemented on the pattern of the scheme of UGC Fellowships being awarded to research students pursuing M. Phil/Ph.D.

The scheme covers all Universities/Institutions recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) as under :

- a. Central/State Universities (including constituent and affiliated institutions) included under Section 2(f) of UGC Act,1956 and having valid accreditation from NAAC.
- b. Deemed Universities under Section 3 of UGC Act i.e. Institution for higher education notified by Central Government to be deemed University, in consultation with UGC and having and having valid accreditation from NAAC.
- c. Institution fully funded by State/ Central Government and empowered to award degrees.
- d. Institutions of National Importance as notified by Ministry of Human Resource Development.

mhrd.gov.in/institutions-national-importance

IV. Implementing agency

UGC is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme and is responsible for laying down procedures/ guidelines for implementing the scheme, including selection of beneficiaries and disbursement of fellowships to selected candidates.

V. Eligibility

- (i) Fellowships shall be awarded to candidates for pursuing regular and full time M.Phil./Ph.D. courses in Universities/Research Institutions recognized by UGC.
- (ii) Scheduled Castes candidates who have already secured admission and qualify NET examination will be given preference. Such candidates will be required to join the fellowship within 3 months of the issue of the JRF award letter.

- (iii) In case sufficient candidates, who have already secured admission are not available, candidates who have not yet secured admission will also be selected in the order of merit in the NET examination.

Such candidates will be eligible to receive fellowship under National Fellowship for SC scheme, subject to admission for M.Phil./Ph.D in Universities/IITs/ Institutions. The validity period of the offer is three years w.e.f. the date of issue of the JRF Award letter under the Scheme.

A scholar is eligible to receive only one fellowship at a time. The scholar is required to declare that he/she will not accept/receive any other monetary benefit/scholarship/fellowship from any other source. In other words, a scholar who is awarded fellowship under this scheme shall not accept any other fellowship/scholarship or hold any appointment, paid or otherwise, or receive any emoluments, salary, stipend etc. from any other source during the tenure of the award (except in case of 'academic leave' of one year). In case, a scholar is already in receipt of any scholarship/fellowship, he/she will have to relinquish either the previous scholarship/fellowship/any other monetary benefit or to forgo the selection under this scheme.

A scholar who does not complete his/her research work during the period of fellowship shall not be eligible to apply again under this scheme. Similarly, a scholar who has completely or partially availed any of these fellowship for Ph.D. earlier shall also not be eligible for fellowship under this schemes.

- (iv) After two years of joining JRF, if the progress in the research work of the awardee is found satisfactory, his/her tenure will be extended for a further period of three years as Senior Research Fellowship (SRF) as per UGC Fellowship Guidelines issued from time to time *in case of students enrolled for Ph.D or M.Phil.+ Ph.D.*
- (v) With regard to combined course of M.Phil and Ph.D., Fellowship will be provided initially for 02 years for M.Phil and after upgradation to Ph.D course, for another 03 years.

- (vi) The fellowship shall be paid from date of issue of JRF award letter under the Scheme for National Fellowship or date of joining of the M.Phil./Ph.D., whichever is later.
- (vii) In case of integrated Ph.D. or M.Phil. to Ph.D., the maximum tenure is 5 years including M.Phil. period of fellowship. For doing M.Phil., fellowship shall be granted for two years or upto the date of submission of M.Phil. dissertation, whichever is earlier.
- (viii) The maximum allowed gap period for continuation from M.Phil. to Ph.D. under this scheme shall be 2 years (from the date of declaration of result of M.Phil to date of admission to Ph.D.). However, the total tenure of fellowship shall remain five years excluding the gap period. No fellowship shall be paid during the gap period.
- (ix) The fellowship shall be granted up to the date of submission of Ph.D. thesis or five years of tenure, whichever is earlier. No extension is permissible beyond the total period of five years of fellowship.
- (x) Employees of any University/ College/ Educational Institution/ Central/ State/ UT Government shall be excluded from availing Fellowship, even if they are on Study Leave or Extra Ordinary Leave to pursue the M.Phil./Ph.D. course.

VI. Number of Fellowships with effect from 2018-19:

- (i) The total number of fellowships to be awarded to the Scheduled Castes students under the scheme is 2000 every year. Out of the 2000 slots available under National Fellowship scheme for SC students 1500 will be allocated for National Eligibility Test- Junior Research Fellowship (NET-JRF) of UGC and remaining 500 for science category students through UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) NET-JRF joint test (for Science streams).
- (ii) If, in an academic year, the allocated slots (i.e 1500 for UGC-NET-JRF and 500 for UGC-CSIRNET-JRF) remain substantially unfilled

(25% or more), the slot allocation may be reviewed in the next academic year and revised accordingly.

- (iii) These 2000 slots will be over and above the SC students selected under the normal reservation policy of the Government.
- (iv) There will be an inclusive provision of reservation for Person with Disabilities (PwD) who belongs to SC category for the consideration as per norms of existing quota of PwD., as per 'The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016'. The minimum degree of disability should be 40% in order to be eligible for any concessions/benefits.

VII. Duration of Fellowship

Name of the Course	Maximum duration	Admissibility of JRF and SRF	
		Junior Research Fellowship (JRF)	Senior Research Fellowship (SRF)
M. Phil	2 years	2 Years	Nil
Ph.D	5 years	2 years	Remaining 3 years
M.Phil + Ph.D	5 years	2 years	Remaining 3 years

VIII. Rate of fellowships and other facilities

(i) The rates of fellowship for JRF and SRF will be at par with the UGC Fellowships. **The rates applicable w.e.f. 01.01.2019 are as follows:**

S.No.	Head	Rates Applicable for	
		JRF	SRF
1.	Fellowship in all streams.	Rs. 31,000/- p.m. for initial two years	Rs. 35,000/- p.m. for remaining tenure
2.	Contingency for Humanities & Social Sciences	Rs.10,000/- p.a. for initial two years	Rs.20,500/- p.a. for remaining tenure
3.	Contingency for Sciences.	Rs. 12,000/- p.a. for initial two years	Rs. 25,000/- p.a. for remaining tenure.
4.	Escort/Reader assistance (All subjects)for physically and visually handicapped candidates	Rs.2, 000/- p.m.	Rs.2, 000/- p.m.

5.	House Rent Allowance (HRA)	@ 8%, 16% and 24% to those students who are not provided with hostel accommodation, in accordance with Govt. of India norms as applicable in the city/ location where the research fellows are working.
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Note regarding HRA:

- a. In case, hostel accommodation is provided to the scholars by their institutions, the scholar is eligible to draw only the hostel fee excluding mess, electricity, water charges etc.
- b. In case hostel accommodation offered by the university/institution is refused by the candidate, he/she will forfeit his/her claim of HRA.
- c. In case of non-availability of hostel accommodation, the scholar may be provided with single accommodation by the host institution. In such cases, the rent paid by the scholar on actual basis shall be reimbursed, subject to the ceiling of HRA as per Govt. of India norms.
- d. If the scholar makes his/her own arrangements of accommodation, he/she shall be entitled to draw HRA as per ceiling and categorization of cities by the Govt. of India.
- e. In case, the scholar wishes to draw HRA, he/she is required to claim HRA on monthly basis by submitting monthly confirmation Certificate in the prescribed format, to his/her institution.

(ii) Other facilities such as medical facilities, leave including maternity leave will be governed as per the guidelines of UGC in case of their fellowship programme.

IX. Procedure for Applying for the Scheme (JRF):

- (i) UGC is the nodal agency for implementing the National Fellowship scheme for SC students.
- (ii) The selection for the award of fellowship to students will be made on the basis of merit of each UGC-NET-JRF or UGC-CSIRNET-JRF examination.
- (iii) While the merit for award of fellowships under NFSC will be drawn up through the NET examination, preference will be given to such students who have already secured admission. However, in case sufficient such candidates are not available, candidates who have not secured admission will also be selected in the order of merit in the NET examination. A separate merit list will be drawn up for such candidates if required.
- (iv) Candidates who have already secured admission are required to join the fellowship within 3 months of issue of JRF award letter under the Scheme. The duration for joining the course will not be extended, candidature of such candidates, who do not join the fellowship within 3 months, shall be cancelled.
- (v) The qualified candidates, who have not secured admission at the time of application for Fellowship under the Scheme, are required to get admission for regular and full time M.Phil./Ph.D in a recognised research institution at the first available opportunity but no later than three years from the date of award of fellowship.
- (vi) Genuineness of the Scheduled Caste Certificate furnished by the awardee shall be verified by the concerned University/Institution before allowing the awardee to avail fellowship under the scheme.
- (vii) The decision of the UGC in regard to awarding the Fellowship shall be final and no appeal would lie against any decision by UGC in regard thereof.
- (viii) The results shall be published on UGC website. Award letters can be downloaded from UGC online application portal or as advertised by UGC.

X. Aadhar based I.D:

Payment of Fellowships and any other admissible allowance should be made to beneficiaries through their bank accounts. The Ministry of Social Justice vide notification number 428 dated Feb,16,2017 has notified Aadhaar as an identity document under Section 7 of Aadhaar Act 2016 for all Scholarship Schemes w.e.f. 16th February 2017. UGC henceforth will make provisions for capturing details of Aadhaar, Aadhaar EID and other alternative documents as provided for in the said notification on their respective Scholarship portals or otherwise for disbursement of fellowship directly in to the beneficiary's account.

XI. Evaluation and Monitoring

- (i) A dashboard to monitor progress, geographic spread, discipline wise students enrolled, sanctions, completion of courses, etc. shall be put in place by UGC on its portal to be accessed by Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment via login credential.
- (ii) Implementation charges payable to UGC will be based on actual expenditure, subject to ceiling of 1% of the total fellowship disbursed by the UGC.
- (iii) A grievance redressal call centre shall be set up to take care of complaints of students availing of JRF/SRF.
