

INSPIRE Scheme

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In News

- The Government of India has approved the INSPIRE Scheme in November 2008 for the 11th Plan Period.
- The programme is continuing in the 12th Plan period at a budgetary allocation of Rs. 2200 crores.

Ministry: Ministry of Science and Technology

About INSPIRE Scheme

- Generation and nurturing of a human talent pool capable of utilizing and developing first principles in science is both a pre-condition and integral part of such an innovation infrastructure.
- An India specific model for attracting talent with an aptitude for research and innovation, for a career in Basic & Natural sciences is required.
- Department of Science & Technology (DST) has developed an innovative programme named Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) to attract talent to the excitement and study of science at an early age, and to help the country build the required critical resource pool for strengthening and expanding the S&T system and R&D base with a long term foresight.

INSPIRE has three components:

- (i) Scheme for Early Attraction of Talent (SEATS),
- (ii) Scholarship for Higher Education (SHE),
- (iii) Assured Opportunity for Research Careers (AORC).



Scheme for Early Attraction of Talent (SEATS)

- **Aims** to attract talented youth to study science by providing INSPIRE Award of Rs 5000 to one million young learners of the age group 10-15 years, ranging from Class VI to Class X standards
- And also by arranging summer camps for about 50,000 science students of Class XI with global leaders in science to experience the joy of innovations on an annual basis through INSPIRE Internship.

Scholarship for Higher Education (SHE)

- **Aims** to enhance rates of attachment of talented youth to undertake higher education in science intensive programmes, by providing scholarships and mentorship.
- The scheme offers 10,000 Scholarship every year at Rs 0.80 lakh per year for the talented youth in the age group 17-22 years, for undertaking Bachelor and Masters level education in natural sciences.
- The main feature of the scheme is the mentorship support provided to every scholar.

Assured Opportunity for Research Careers (AORC)

- **Aims** to attract, attach, retain and nourish talented young scientific Human Resource for strengthening the R&D foundation and base.
- It has two sub-components. In the first component i.e. INSPIRE Fellowship (age group of 22-27 years), it offers 1000 fellowships every year, for carrying out doctoral degrees in both basic and applied sciences including

engineering and medicine.

- In the second component i.e. INSPIRE Faculty Scheme, it offers assured opportunity every year for 1000 post-doctoral researchers in the age group of 27-32 years, through contractual and tenure track positions for 5 years in both basic and applied sciences areas.

SERB-POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research)

- Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare today launched a Scheme titled “SERB-POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research)”, designed exclusively for women scientists, in a function today on an e-platform.
- The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), a Statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, has been contemplating to institute a scheme to mitigate gender disparity in science and engineering research in various S&T programs in Indian academic institutions and R&D laboratories.

SERB – POWER Scheme will have two components namely

1) SERB-POWER Fellowship

- Target: Women researchers in 35-55 years of age. Up-to 25 Fellowships per year and not more than 75 at any point in time.
- Components of support: Fellowship of Rs. 15,000/- per month in addition to regular income; Research grant of Rs. 10 lakh per annum; and Overhead of Rs. 90,000/- per annum.
- Duration: Three years, without the possibility of extension. Once in a career.

2) SERB – POWER Research Grants

- POWER Grants will empower women researchers by funding them under following two categories:
 - Level I (Applicants from IITs, IISERs, IISc, NITs, Central Universities, and National Labs of Central Government Institutions): The scale of funding is up to 60 lakhs for three years.
 - Level II (Applicants from State Universities / Colleges and Private Academic Institutions): The scale of funding is up to 30 lakhs for three years.
- POWER Grant will be regulated through terms of reference conforming to SERB-CRG (Science and Engineering Research Board-Core Research Grant) guidelines.

While a Search-cum-Selection Committee constituted for the purpose will help in identifying the POWER Fellowship, the existing Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) mechanism will be used to select the POWER Research Grants.