

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE TENTH MEETING OF THE EMPOWERED COMMITTEE ON BASIC SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH HELD ON 10TH AUGUST 2007 AT 11.30 AM IN THE UGC OFFICE.

The Tenth meeting of the Empowered Committee on Basic Scientific Research in Universities under the Chairmanship of Prof.M.M.Sharma was held on 10th August, 2007 at 11.30 AM in the UGC Office, New Delhi. The following attended the meeting:-

1. Prof.M.M.Sharma
3, Jaswant Baug,(Runwal Park),
Behind Akbaralys,
V.N.Purav Marg,
Chembur Naka,
Mumbai-400 071
2. Prof.Mool Chand Sharma
Vice-Chairman,UGC
3. Prof.Goverdhan Mehta
Hon.Prof. & CSIR,
Bhatnagar Fellow,
Indian Institute of Science,
Bangalore-560 012
4. Prof.P.Rama Rao
Flat No.301,Naimisum, Plot No.22,
Tri Nagar Colony,
Hyderabad-500 073
5. Prof.S.P.Thyagarajan
#5, Ist Main Road,
Nehru Nagar, Adyar,
Chennai-600 020
6. Dr.(Mrs.)Pankaj Mittal
Joint Secretary,UGC
7. Ms.Parbati Bose
Under Secretary, UGC

Professor Shridhar Gadre identified by the Empowered Committee to take up the consultancy project for selection of awardees for D.S.Kothari Post-Doctoral Fellowships was invited by Professor M.M.Sharma for discussions with the Empowered Committee.

At the outset, Professor M.M.Sharma briefed Professor Gadre regarding the expectations from the project. He informed that all the applications would be received “on line” and have to be processed “on line” in a time bound manner. This would require a lot of support from the UGC as well as Pune University in which Professor Gadre was employed at present. Professor Sharma suggested that the UGC must sign an MoU with Vice-Chancellor, Pune University for the consultancy project indicating the details of the consultancy project.

Professor Gadre thanked Professor Sharma and gave his consent to undertake this project. He, however, expected that full freedom be given to him for implementing this project. He mentioned that he would need the following infrastructure for implementing this project.

1. Server with two PCs.
2. Two internet connections one from ERNET and an other from an alternate service provider.
3. Communication facilities like FAX, Phone etc.
4. Out sourcing of software development.
5. Administrative support including space and other facilities from Pune University.
6. Two Project Assistants familiar with computer.
7. Official version of operating system and other softwares.
8. Any other logistic requirements.

It was proposed that an MoU may be signed between UGC and Pune University indicating the responsibility of each party for undertaking this project. The funds for this project would be sanctioned to Professor Gadre through Pune University. The Committee made it clear that the responsibilities of Professor Gadre would include, inviting the proposals, sending them for peer review and selecting the deserving candidates for award of D.S.Kothari Post-Doctoral Fellowships. The

proposals would be invited “on line” as well as physically. For peer review, it was suggested that Panel of five experts in each major discipline would be identified by the Empowered Committee in consultation with the Professor Gadre. The selections made by Professor Gadre would be approved by the Empowered Committee. The responsibility of sending the award letters and the payment to the awardees would rest with the UGC.

The selection criteria may include scholastic record, quality of the proposals, publications, the institute where research is proposed to be done, recommendations of the Ph.D. Guide, Mentor’s view (with whom the PDF would be attached) and the evaluation of Peers.

The Empowered Committee recommended that the Professor Gadre may be designated as “National Coordinator” and may be paid an honorarium of Rs.25,000/-p.m. for undertaking this project. An amount of upto Rs.47.20 lakhs may be earmarked for implementing this project in the first year which would include non-recurring cost for setting up infrastructure and recurring cost for first year including honorarium, staff, contingency, communication facilities etc. as per the details given below:-

	Rs.in lakhs
1. Non-Recurring:	
Two server-grade titanium machines with 4 GB RAM, 250GB x 2 disks each, with authorized softwares, 5, KVA UPS, Air conditioners and office furniture, telephone, fax, photocopy and additional email facility etc. and Purchase/In-house development of software for the project.	22.00
2. Recurring:	
(A) Services of Senior Project Assistant and Junior Project Assistant respectively @Rs.12,000 and 8,000 p.m. for 3 years.	7.20
(B) Travel, communication charges, telephone charges, honorarium and stationery, contingency (altogether per year expenses Rs.6 lakhs)	18.00
Total Estimated Expenses	47.20

Thereafter, a recurring grant of upto Rs.20 lakhs p.a. may be provided for the project.

The maximum time to operationalise the scheme shall be three months.

The Empowered Committee strongly recommended that this scheme should be made highly visible through press releases, advertisements in the press and UGC Website.

The Committee then undertook the regular Agenda items and recommended as follows:-

Item No.1: Confirmation of minutes of the meeting held on 2.7.2007.

The minutes of the last meeting of the Empowered Committee were confirmed with the correction that in Para-5 "PG Scholars" may be replaced with "Ph.D. Scholars".

Item No.2: Action taken on the Minutes.

The Empowered Committee noted the action taken on various issues and appreciated the efforts made by the UGC for implementing the recommendations of the Empowered Committee.

Item No.3: Letter received from MHRD regarding strengthening of research in Humanities and Social Sciences.
&

Item No.4: Letter received received MHRD regarding DBT programme for establishing Centres of excellence in Biotechnology.

The Committee recommended that a copy of the schemes Faculty Recharge may be sent to DBT while informing that the UGC welcomes the measures taken by DBT and since there is a commitment for life time, the DBT and UGC can coordinate on the issue, if DBT agrees to the provisions contained in the UGC scheme

Item No.5: Proposal received from some of departments for establishing Networking Summer-Winter Schools.

The Committee recommended that till now very few proposals were received under the above scheme. The Committee was, however, informed that of late the frequency of receipt of proposals has increased and it is expected that within the next 15 days many proposals would be received. The Committee suggested that a tabular be prepared for consideration of the Committee in the next meeting.

Item No.6: Any other item.

The following additional recommendations made by the Empowered Committee:-

1. Five more JRFs for the year 2007-2008 may be released to CAS/DSA Departments in Sciences, Bio-Sciences, Agricultural Sciences and Engineering Sciences.
2. By December, 2007 all the Universities may be requested to indicate the utilization of the fellowships given earlier.
3. A para may be included in the SAP Guidelines mentioning that the review teams, visiting the SAP Departments may also review the implementation of the schemes floated by Empowered Committee for SAP Departments including infrastructure grant and fellowships released. The optimum utilization of the grant given under the scheme of Empowered Committee may be ensured to find out the impact of the support given by the Empowered Committee. A similar request may be sent to DST for a similar exercise by the Committees which visit FIST departments. A letter may be sent to Secretary, DST on this issue.
4. The Vice-Chairman,UGC mentioned that possibilities are being explored to hold 5 regional workshops of CAS Departments in various regions and if it works out so then in each of these workshops a time slot could be allotted to the Empowered Committee. The Empowered Committee liked the idea and suggested Professor Mool Chand Sharma, Vice-Chairman,UGC to inform the Empowered Committee in advance about these 5 workshops if finalized, so that a member of the Empowered Committee can address these workshops while explaining

expectations from the CAS Department with regard to support given under Empowered Committee programmes.

5. The Empowered Committee was of the view that by the next meeting of the Empowered Committee, the Chairman,UGC should inform the composition of the Empowered Cell in the UGC to the Empowered Committee. The Committee was of the view that if required, officials may be hired on contract basis for the purpose. The Empowered Committee was of the view that the letter may be sent again to the Central Govt. for the post of Director in the Empowered Cell while drawing parallel with the posts of Director (Science) created by the Central Govt. at the time of launching the scheme of COSIST.
6. The Committee was also in favour of giving Rs.5 lakhs to each PG Science College out of the 17 Colleges identified under UGC scheme of Colleges with Potential for Excellence. The Committee recommended that the number of science departments in each of the College with Potential for Excellence may be obtained to undertake the above task.

The Empowered Committee recommended that a meeting may be fixed in the UGC Office on 3rd September, 2007 at 11.30 AM to sign an MoU between UGC and Vice-Chancellor, Pune University. It was decided that the draft MoU would be made by Professor S.P.Thyagrajan in consultation with the Professor Gadre.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.