

**REVISED GUIDELINES OF RAJIV GANDHI NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP FOR STUDENTS
WITH DISABILITIES - AS PER PATTERN OF UGC SCHEMES**

**CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEME OF 'RAJIV GANDHI NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP' FOR
PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIPS TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO PURSUE
M.PHIL AND PH.D PROGRAMMES IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

(Effective from 1st April 2012)

I. Background

Government of India has launched a Central Sector scheme namely, Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship (RGNF) during the financial year 2012-13 to increase opportunities to students with disabilities for pursuing higher education leading to degrees such as M. Phil. and Ph.D. The scheme will take effect from 1st April 2012. The scheme caters the requirements of the students with disabilities for pursuing research degree in universities, research institutions and scientific institutions. This will not only enable them to be eligible for employment to the posts of Lecturers lying vacant in various colleges and universities but will equip them to effectively take advantage of the growing opportunities at the national and international level in the context of the new economic order.

II. Scope of the scheme

The scheme caters total number of 200 Fellowship [Junior Research Fellows (JRF)] per year to students with disabilities. The scheme covers all universities/institutions recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) **and Non-Universities/Institutions** and is implemented by the UGC itself on the pattern of the scheme of UGC Fellowship being awarded to research students pursuing M.Phil. and Ph.D. These fellowships will be available to students with disabilities who are covered under The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. Thus, a person with disability who wishes to avail the benefit under the Act has to obtain a disability certificate from the medical authority notified for the purpose.

III. Implementing agency

UGC is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme. UGC notifies the scheme by releasing suitable advertisements in the Press.

IV. Eligibility

- i. Any student with disabilities who has been admitted to M.Phil./Ph.D. degree in a University or academic institution by completing the required formalities for admission in that University or academic institution is eligible for the award of Fellowship, subject to provision of the scheme as per the advertisement of UGC. **The candidate must get himself/herself registered for M.Phil/Ph.D at the first available opportunity but not later than within a period of two years from the receipt of award letter. This period is not extendable. However, the actual payment of fellowship will be made with effect from the date of joining only.**
- ii. After two years, if the progress in the research works of the awardee is found satisfactory, his/her tenure will be extended for a further period of three years as Senior Research Fellowship (SRF). The research work will be assessed by a three member committee set up by the University. The committee will consist of the Supervisor, Head of the Department and one outside expert in the subject. JRF may be terminated in case the progress of the candidate is not found satisfactory by the committee. The SRF shall be sanctioned on year to year basis on the recommendation of the Supervisor of the candidate duly accepted/rejected by the Head of the Department and finally approved by the Vice-Chancellor. The total period of award of JRF and SRF shall not exceed a period of five years. The fellowship is paid from the date of registration of the students in M.Phil./Ph.D. course.

- iii. The students with disabilities once considered eligible for the fellowship shall not be entitled to any other benefits from Central or State Government or any other body like UGC offering similar benefit to avoid duplication and increase coverage. Only those doing regular and full time M.Phil./Ph.D. course of a University/Research Institution shall be eligible for the fellowship. 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 EOL to pursue the M.Phil./Ph.D. course.

V. Number of Fellowships

- i. The total number of fellowships to be awarded to the students with disabilities under the scheme is 200 every year. **There is a provision of reservation of 15% for scheduled Castes and 7 ½% for Scheduled Tribes for award of fellowships respectively under the scheme of Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for Students with disabilities.** In case of non-availability of adequate number of students with disabilities candidate, the number of fellowship not availed during a year will be carried forward to the next Academic session.
- ii. However, during 2012-13 and 2013-14, the balance number of unutilized JRF may be extended to deserving students for award of SRF scholarship. This will be subject to assessment by UGC as per their guidelines for award of SRF scholarships, within the budget provision of the scheme. In such cases UGC will consult the Ministry which will take appropriate action.
- iii. In case, the number of candidates exceeds the number of available awards, the UGC will select the candidates based on the percentage of marks obtained by the candidates in their Post Graduation examination.

VI. Duration of Fellowships

Name of the Course	Maximum Duration	Admissibility of JRF and SRF	
		JRF	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

VII. Nature of financial assistance as per pattern of UGC schemes w.e.f. 01.12.2014

S.No	Item	Fellowship
1.	Fellowship (For All Subjects)	@ Rs.25,000/- per month for initial two years (JRF), @ Rs. 28,000/- per month for the remaining tenure (SRF)
2.	Contingency (For Humanities, Social and Sciences and Commerce)	@ Rs.10,000/- per annum for initial two years, @ Rs.20,500/- per annum for remaining three years.
3.	Contingency (For Sciences and Engineering & Technology)	@ Rs.12,000/- per annum for initial two years, @ Rs.25,000/- per annum for remaining three years.
4.	Departmental Assistance [Discontinued as per pattern of e-payment towards RGNF-SC/ST and MANF]	@ Rs.3,000/- p.a. per student to the host institution for providing infrastructure
5.	Escorts / Reader Assistance	@ Rs.2,000/- per month in case of physically and visually challenged candidates.
5.	HRA	As per University / Institution rules.

VIII. Eligibility for Senior Research Fellowship

In order to qualify for the award of Senior Research Fellowship, the UGC norms would be applicable.

IX. Procedure for applying for RGNF

- i. UGC is the nodal agency for implementing the RGNF scheme for students with disabilities.
- ii. UGC notifies the scheme by inserting suitable advertisement in the press.
- iii. UGC is implementing the scheme from the financial year 2012-13 and takes effect from 01.04.2012.
- iv. There is no restriction as regards to the minimum marks in the Post Graduation examination.
- v. It would be sufficient for a student with disabilities candidate to have passed the Post Graduation Examination for being eligible for the RGNF.
- vi. There is no restriction to the effect that a student with disabilities should have cleared NET/SLET examination for being eligible for receiving the RGNF.
- vii. UGC will give one month's time to the candidate for applying for the RGNF.
- viii. UGC will select the candidates for award of RGNF.
- ix. The distribution of fellowships amongst different States/UTs would primarily be in the proportion of students with disabilities population in the respective States/UTs.
- x. In case the numbers of fellowships so allocated to a State/UT are not fully utilized, due to non-availability of eligible candidates, the UGC will allocate the slots amongst the other States/UTs where the number of eligible candidates is much more than the slots allocated to that State/UT. A committee consisting of the representatives of UGC and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment will take this decision.
- xi. UGC will evolve a mechanism for identification of the beneficiaries linking with UID/Aadhar number and ensure on-line/electronic transfer of scholarships to students.
- xii. UGC will also issue a booklet containing all the details about the scheme, for the benefit of prospective candidates.
- xiii. UGC will evolve its own mechanism for verifying the genuineness of the students with disabilities availing of the RGNF on fake certificate.
- xiv. The decision of the UGC in regard to awarding the RGNF shall be final and no appeal would lie against any decision by UGC in regard thereof.

X. Evaluation and Monitoring

The expenditure on evaluation/monitoring of the fellowship programme shall be met out of the funds provided for this scheme. Award of SRF should be done after appropriate evaluation of performance in carrying out the research work by the candidate in the Junior Research phase.