

**Central Sector Scheme of
National Fellowship for OBC Students
(Effective from April 2019)**

Scheme Guidelines:

I. Background

Government of India had launched a Central Sector Scheme namely, National Fellowship for OBC Students during the financial year 2014-15 to increase the opportunities for the students of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) for pursuing higher education leading to acquiring degrees such as M.Phil. and Ph.D.

The scheme aims at providing financial assistance to the OBC students in obtaining quality higher education leading to degrees such as M.Phil. and Ph.D. 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 also equip them to effectively take advantage of the growing opportunities at the national and international level in the context of new economic order.

II. Scope of the Scheme

The scheme is designed to provide a total number of 300 Junior Research Fellowships per year from the year 2014-15 and 300 Senior Research Fellowships from 2016-17 to Other Backward Class (OBC) students. The number of intake of JRF has been enhanced from 300 to 1000 per year onwards 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 (for Humanities/Social Sciences) or
- ii. UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) NET-JRF Joint Test (for Science)

The scheme covers all universities/institutions recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and are 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 1000 slots will be over and above the number of OBC students selected under the normal reservation policy of the Government for UGC Fellowship.

III. Implementing Agency:

The UGC is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme.

IV. Eligibility:

- i. Eligibility conditions are as per notification for UGC-NET and CSIR-UGC-NET examinations. The other Backward Class (OBC) candidates qualifying for the award of NFOBC will be eligible to receive fellowship subject to finding placement in the University/IITs/Institutions. The validity period of the offer is 3 years with effect from the date of issue of JRF Award letter. However, in case of candidates who have already joined M/Phil. /Ph.D. the date of commencement of fellowship shall be from the date of declaration of result of NFOBC or date of their joining, whichever is later.

- ii. Students belonging to Other Backward Class (OBC) category 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.
- iii. After two years, 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 Fellow (SRF). The research work will be assessed as per the UGC norms. The total period of award of JRF and SRF shall not exceed a period of 5 years.
- iv. At least 4% of the total seats should be reserved for students with disabilities while making selection of candidates for award of fellowships by the UGC.
- v. Employees of any University/College/Educational institution/Central/State/UT Government shall be excluded from availing the fellowship, even if they are on study leave or Extra Ordinary Leave (EOL) to pursue M.Phil./Ph.D.

V. Number of slots for Fellowship:

- i. The total number of slots for NFOBC under the scheme is 1000 per year. Out of 1000 slots available under this scheme, 750 will be allocated for the subjects under National Eligibility Test – Junior Research Fellowship (NET-JRF) of UGC and remaining 250 UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) NET-JRF joint test (for Science streams).
- ii. These 1000 slots will be over and above the OBC Students selected under the normal reservation policy of the Government.

VI. Duration of Fellowship

Name of 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. Rate of fellowships

- i. The rates of fellowship for JRF and SRF will be at par with the UGC Fellowship (w.e.f 01.01.2019). Presently these rates are as follows:

Fellowship in Science Humanities and Social Science	@ Rs.31,000/- p.m. for initial two years (JRF) @ Rs.35,000/- pm. for remaining tenure (SRF)
Fellowship in Engineering & Technology	
Contingency for Humanities & Social Sciences	@ Rs.10,000/- p.a. for initial two years @ Rs.20,500/- p.a. for remaining tenure
Contingency for Sciences, Engineering & Technology	@ Rs.12,000/- p.a. for initial two years @ Rs.25,000/- p.a. for remaining tenure
Escorts/Reader assistance (All subjects)	@ Rs.2,000/- p.m. in cases of physically and visually handicapped candidates

- ii. The House Rent Allowance (HRA) will be on the UGC pattern and will be payable to those students who are not provided with hostel accommodation. In case hostel accommodation offered by the University/institution is refused, the student will forfeit his claim of HRA, other facilities such as medical facilities, leave including maternity leave will be governed as per the guidelines of the UGC in case of their fellowship programme.

VIII. Selection Procedure for National Fellowship for OBCs (JRF):

- i. UGC is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme.
- ii. The selection for the award of NFOBC to students will be made on the basis of merit in each UGC-NET-JRF and CSIR-NET-JRF examination and will be made twice in a year. However, preference will be given to such students who have secured admission. 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 would be drawn up for such candidates, if required.
- iii. The qualified candidates have to enroll in universities/institutions/colleges recognized under:
 - a. Under Sections 2 (f) of the UGC Act, 1956, i.e., Universities established under Central, Provincial or State Acts or any other institution recognized by UGC.
 - b. Grant-in-Aid 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.
 - c. Universities/Institution funded by State/ Central Government.
 - d. Institutions of National Important as notified as by Ministry of Human Resource Development. (mhrd.gov.in/institutions-national-importance)
- iv. The decision of the UGC in regarding to awarding the fellowship shall be final and no appeal could be filed against it.

IX. Monitoring & Evaluation

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.

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

X. Aadhaar Seeding:

Payment of fellowship and any other admissible allowance shall be made to beneficiaries through their bank account on DBT mode. The Ministry of Social Justice vide notification number 428 dated February 16, 2017 has notified Aadhaar as identify document under Section 7 of Aadhaar Act, 2016 for all scholarship/fellowship schemes.

XI. Procedure for release of grant by UGC:

- (i) The fellowship amount shall be disbursed to the awardee on Director Benefit Transfer (DBT) basis. The process of updating monthly confirmation with respect to the awardees by the host institution and payments thereof is being implemented on a dedicated web portal <https://scholarship.canarabank.in/AdminLogin.aspx>.
- (ii) Bank account number of the beneficiaries will be validated through PFMS for creating of beneficiary ID.
- (iii) Video tutorial and guidelines for operating the web portal is available on UGC website and may be referred for use.
- (iv) Genuineness of the OBC certificate furnished by the awardee shall be verified by the concerned University/Institution before the details are updated on the web portal.
- (v) The concerned University/Institution shall also ensure that the awardee is not availing any other fellowship/project from any other organisation at the time of selection and fulfills all the other conditions as laid in the guidelines.
- (vi) The fellow will undertake regular full time research work under the approved guide in a subject selected by him/her and approved by the university/selection committee.
- (vii) In case any candidate is found to have obtained fellowship through fraudulent means or provided incorrect information, the university/institution may cancel his/her fellowship under intimation to the UGC.

XII. Resignation and Transfer:

- (i) If any Fellow resigns or relinquishes the fellowship before the end of the tenure, information may be submitted by the concerned university/institution on the designated web portal itself and stop payment link may be used at the time of monthly confirmation.
- (ii) Transfer of research place will be allowed only once during the entire tenure. Transfer can be made by the concerned university/institution itself on the designated web portal through the concerned link available therein.

XIII. Cancellation of Award:

The fellowship is liable to cancellation, in case of :

- i. If the scholar is found to be ineligible to receive the fellowship, at any point of time during the entire duration of the fellowship.
- ii. If it is found that the fellowship has been availed/is claimed by furnishing false/wrong/misleading information.
- iii. If any adverse report is received from the institution.
- iv. Misconduct/misbehavior/corrupt practices.
- v. Unsatisfactory progress of research work.
- vi. Violation of terms and conditions of these guidelines.
- vii. Plagiarism or unethical practices, in any form.
- viii. Candidate is already availing scholarship/fellowship from any other source.
- ix. Candidate is found employed during the M.Phil.Ph.D. research.
