

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is BIG scheme and its salient features?

Biotechnology Ignition Grant (BIG) Scheme is grant-in-aid funding to support individuals and startups in the field of Biotechnology. BIG scheme invests in ideas that have clear potential to translate into commercial products/technologies. The scheme provides funding, mentorship, access to incubation, other supports for ideation to proof of concept. Funding will be in the form of Grant-in-Aid up to Rs. 50 Lakhs. So, if you have an idea, strong rationale supporting it, addressing an unmet need, you can apply for BIG funding to progress from ideation to Proof-of-concept.

2. What are the Biotechnology areas supported under BIG?

Healthcare, Life sciences including Drugs, Biologics, Delivery systems, Medical Devices, Diagnostics, Biomaterials, others; Industrial Biotechnology including enzymes, biofertilizers, bioprocesses, waste treatment, others; Agriculture and allied areas such as Nutrition, Fisheries, Poultry, Sericulture, Animal Husbandry, Aquaponics, others; Waste to value; Sanitation; Biofuels, Clean Energy; Bioservices and Bioanalytics including Big Data, Artificial intelligence, Machine Learning, Internet of Things, Automation integrated in Biotech applications

3. What all is supported under the upto Rs 50 Lakh grant?

BIG award provides funding support for buying equipment, reagents, components, hiring skilled manpower for team building, travel, incubation charges, rentals, engaging services, etc in the 18 months period of BIG grant.

During the BIG tenure, BIRAC extends several networking opportunity to connect with experts, mentors, industry, investors, peer to peer learning, specialized trainings & workshops, exposure to various platforms on merit basis. These opportunities are made available through BIRAC's ecosystem supporting partners including BIG partners, BioNEST clusters, and a huge network of extended partners.

4. Who all can apply?

Individual Entrepreneur, a registered Startup including LLP.

5. I am a person of Indian origin but hold a foreign passport can I apply?

No, only Indians with Indian passports are eligible to apply for this scheme. OCIs are not eligible to apply.

6. Can I apply as an undergraduate student?

No, the Project leader must have completed basic graduation at the time of application submission.

7. Can I apply as a faculty/scientist/research scholar/PG student?

Yes, if you are pursuing translational research leading to formation of a startup. As a procedural requirement, you are required to obtain a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from your institute/employer. Faculty members who are not willing to create a Startup within BIG term of 18 months are encouraged to apply under other schemes of BIRAC for Faculty.

8. I am employed with a company; can I apply for this scheme?

Yes, you can apply as an individual but need to provide an undertaking that you will terminate your association with the current employer and take up the project full time, if selected.

Or, your application should be submitted under Company/LLP category with employer company being the applicant company.

9. What age of startup is considered as eligible age to apply?

The date of incorporation of the Company/LLP should not be earlier than 5 years from the date of BIG Call launch

10. Does Project Leader have to be a shareholder in the Company/LLP?

Yes, the Project Leader must be a shareholder in the applicant company .

11. What minimum percentage of shares does a PI must own to be eligible for the BIG?

There is no such criterion of minimum percentage.

12. Can proprietorship firm apply for BIG scheme?

No, the legal entity should be a company registered under the Companies Act.

13. Can Institute apply for BIG scheme?

No, Institutes/Universities are not eligible to apply for this scheme. Students may be eligible to apply.

14. Our firm is registered under Society's act, are we eligible to apply for BIG scheme?

No, the legal entity should be a company registered under the Companies Act.

15. Is DSIR recognition needed to apply for this scheme?

No, DSIR certification is not needed to apply for this scheme.

16. Where to apply?

Only online applications are accepted. To apply under BIG Scheme, applicant needs to register on BIRAC website "https://www.birac.nic.in/desc_new.php?id=327" under 'New User' and submit the application.

17. I have registered for BIPP, CRS and want to register using the same user name, e-mail ID for BIG.

Please use a different user name and e-mail id for submitting BIG proposal.

18. What are the evaluation criteria for selection of BIG Grantees?

The indicative criteria for evaluation of an application include Unmet need, Value proposition/differentiation, Technical viability, Team strength. Proposed product/technology must have Commercialization Potential.

19. What is the process of selection?

It is 4 tier selection process. All eligible applications go thorough following steps:

- a. Preliminary Selection Committee (PSC) screens the proposals for scheme fit, adequacy of details, plagiarism
- b. The PSC recommended proposals are then reviewed Online by subject experts
- c. The recommended applicants are then called for F2F presentations before Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP). The proposal will be scored on a scale of 100.
- d. Expert Selection Committee (ESC) will decide the final cutoff of marks and recommend the proposals for BIG funding.

20. When can I get to know the final decision made by ESC?

It typically takes 4 months for the final announcement of BIG results from closing of the call. You will be updated at each stage by BIG Partners about your application status.

21. What is the duration of the BIG project?

The project must complete within 18 months.

22. Is there any limit on number of projects to be submitted?

No, but only ONE will be eventually funded. It is encouraged to submit the best one proposal (the most prioritized) by the applicant. Submitting more than one project reflects poorly on the applicant's ability to prioritize options.

23. Should we have a guide/mentor?

A Guide or Mentor is mostly preferable but not mandatory.

24. What do Incubator and Incubatee mean?

An Incubator is defined as facility designed for housing R&D driven start-up companies or individual incubatees. It typically provides the incubation space, access to equipments, mentoring and other required services to start-up companies/individuals for their initial growth.

An Incubatee is defined as an individual or a company located in an Incubator and availing its services after formally associating with the incubator.

25. Is it necessary to be incubated at the time of application?

No. Only a Letter of Intent for incubation from an incubator shall suffice. It is applicant's discretion to choose any of the 50 BIRAC's BioNEST incubators / BIRAC's BIG partner incubators / any other incubator present in the country.

26. Where to obtain Letter of Intent?

Write to the incubator where you intend to incubate.

27. What is an Incubator and BIG Partner and their relationship?

Incubator is a center that has the required lab infrastructure, required network to support your proposed BIG work. Certain BioNEST incubators have been officially recognized as BIRAC's BIG Partners. These incubators are mandated to implentthe BIG Scheme (Facilitate and mentor the aspirant applicants and BIG grantees). BIG Partners are responsible for initial screening of the proposal, technical due diligence,

financial due diligence, project monitoring, fund disbursement, arranging for workshops etc.

28. Can my institute be my Incubator?

The Incubators should have a legal status i.e. should be either a registered society or a registered trust or a registered company.

29. Can my BIG Partner be my incubator?

Yes, but it is NOT mandatory. You may choose to incubate at the incubator of your choice. This may include BIG partner or any other incubator offering facilities and services required for execution of your project.

- a. BIRAC supported BioNEST Bio Incubators list can be viewed here
<<https://www.birac.nic.in/bionest.php>>

30. Which BIG partner do I select?

If you need to know more about our BIG partners, please visit their website or contact them directly.

S. No.	BIG Partner	Contact information
1	Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP), Bangalore	Website: www.ccamp.res.in ; Email: ccamp_big@ccamp.res.in Contact Number: 080-67185055
2	Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), New Delhi	Website: www.fitt-iitd.org ; Email: bbif.fitt@gmail.com Contact Number: 011-26597116, 011-26597167
3	IKP Knowledge Park, Hyderabad	Website: www.ikpknowledgepark.com ; Email: viswanadham@ikpknowledgepark.com Contact Number: 040-23480022
4	KIIT BioNEST, Bhubaneswar	Website: www.kiitincubator.in ; Email: tbi@kiitincubator.in , biotbi@kiitincubator.in Contact Number: +91-9178665577
5	Venture Center (Entrepreneurship Development Center), Pune	Website: www.venturecenter.co.in ; Email: big@venturecenter.co.in Contact Number: 020-25865877/76; 9172232213
6	SIDBI Innovation & Incubation Centre (SIIC), IIT Kanpur	Website: https://siicincubator.com Email: siic_pic@iitk.ac.in Contact Number: 0512-2597979

S. No.	BIG Partner	Contact information
7	Society For Innovation & Entrepreneurship - SINE, IIT Bombay	Website: https://sineiitb.org/ Email: sine_big@sineiitb.org Contact Number: 022-2576 7016/4919 022 25720360/1220
8	a-IDEA , Technology Business Incubator of NAARM, Hyderabad	Website: https://aidea.naarm.org.in/ Email: biracbig.aidea@naarm.in Contact Number: 040-24581427/262; 9989928773; 7842780533

31. In case of Individual applicants, who will receive the funds?

The applicant will receive the fund in a separate dedicated, auditable no-lien account. The fund disbursement is linked with milestones through BIRAC's BIG Partners.

32. Do I have to pay royalty?

BIG grantees on successful progression to commercialization are required to pay 5% royalty on net sales of the product/technology developed through BIRAC support till the time such royalty payment becomes equivalent to the grant-in aid assistance disbursed by BIRAC for the Project.

33. Is the information provided by me kept Confidential?

Confidentiality is maintained for all the proposals that are received under different schemes. All the external reviewers sign a non-disclosure agreement and no conflict agreement before viewing the proposals.
