

# BIRAC **EDGE** Centers

**Enabling Development and Growth of Enterprises**

*Strengthen and Expand Biotech Innovation Ecosystem*

## Request For Proposal

## 1. Introduction:

BIRAC, a not-for-profit Section 8, Public Sector Enterprise, set up under the aegis of the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India, announces a program called “BIRAC Enabling Development and Growth of Enterprises (EDGE) Centers” to facilitate the growth of the ecosystem by supporting several individual components driving development, commercialization, and market penetration of biotech and biobased products and technologies. Broad categories being considered for support include:

- A. **Internationalization** of Indian biotech Startups, SMEs and companies
- B. **Capacity Building** for Bio-Incubation Ecosystem
- C. **Advancing and Accelerating** Entrepreneurship
- D. **Facilitating and promoting** Investments
- E. **Field Validation** of biotech and bio-based products and technologies
- F. **Promoting bio-based strengths of NER** to boost local entrepreneurship

## 2. Scope of the Call:

Proposals are invited for BIRAC EDGE Centers under the following categories:

### A. **Internationalization** of Indian biotech Startups, SMEs and companies (**Category: EDGE-Int**):

- Promoting the growth of Startups, SMEs, and companies in India and overseas through Networking, Market Needs assessment, Technology Partnerships, Knowledge Exchange, etc.
- Mapping needs and gaps of an international territory and connecting with strengths and solutions to drive innovation deployment
- Connect and establish a bridge between Innovation Ecosystems and emerging markets, investors, and technology adopters across the globe
- Offer a one-place solution where innovators can identify partners, investors, mentors and customers across geographic boundaries.
- Creation of knowledge reports

### B. **Capacity Building for Bio-Incubation Ecosystem** (**Category: EDGE-Incubate**):

- Training of Incubator Managers and orientation for Senior Leaders of Host Institutions of Bio-Incubation centres

- Supporting the Incubation Centre with essential mentorship and resources to build a long-term sustainable plan.
- Create an interactive and dynamic portal for performance monitoring and data management of BioNEST Bio-incubators
- Creation of high-value and focused learning content to be used as resource material for bio-incubation professionals
- Mapping of Incubation Ecosystem and creation of knowledge reports

#### **C. Advancing and Accelerating Entrepreneurship (Category: EDGE-Accelerate):**

- Nurture pipeline of bio-entrepreneurs for Deep-tech life sciences innovations
- Providing a structured, high-impact acceleration environment for biotech startups to grow and scale their ventures.
- Creation of high-value and focused learning content to be used as resource material by aspiring entrepreneurs
- Engagement with mentors and advisors to enhance business, finance, statutory compliance, and marketing capabilities.
- Handholding for product development, manufacturing and licensing

#### **D. Capacity Building for Facilitating Investments (Category: EDGE-Inv)**

- Conduct webinars/outreach events for domestic and global Limited Partners (LPs), General Partners (GPs), Policymakers, and others to educate and promote India as an investable destination for biotech.
- Organize knowledge-sharing sessions (Roundtables/meets) engaging global investors, and PE-VC firms to mobilize capital for the biotech sector
- Conduct capacity-building/training programs covering various aspects of fund management, from Fundraising to Exit and governance policies.
- Provide biotech investors, incubators, accelerators, etc., with the knowledge and resources to effectively support biotech enterprises
- Connect with other national and global organizations to boost the biotech startup and investment ecosystem
- Creation of sectoral reports and knowledge-based reports on funding and investment trends in the biotech sector

### **E. Field Validation (Category: EDGE-FV):**

- Support, streamline, and fast-track the field validation process, enabling healthcare startups to bring solutions to the market efficiently and effectively.
- Provide networking and connect in real-life settings/environments such as hospitals, PHCs, CHCs, etc.
- Support startups to design, plan, and execute multi-centre clinical trials and cohort studies
- Organize capacity-building programs and awareness sessions
- Creation of reports and white papers

### **F. Promoting bio-based strengths of NER to boost local entrepreneurship (Category: EGDE-NER)**

- Capacity building and training workshops for boosting local entrepreneurship in the NER
- Providing market access and opportunities to local entrepreneurs outside NER
- Specialized programs for women and SHGs
- Promoting the use of technology by local entrepreneurs of NER
- Creating avenues and opportunities for the creation of tech-based startups in the NER

### **3. Who can apply?**

The proposals can be submitted by one or more Indian legal entities under the following categories:

- Operating as an incubator:
  - In existence for at least three years
  - Has a full-time lead
  - Has supported at least 25 startups in the Biotech domain
- Operating as an independent Innovation Enabling Organization/Entrepreneurial Support Organization (ESO):
  - In existence for at least three years
  - Has a full-time lead
  - Has demonstrated relevant expertise and experience for providing niche support with regard to the category of EDGE Centre applied for.

#### 4. Types of eligible entities:

- **Indian Company/LLP (For Profit and Not for Profit)**
  - Should be registered under the Indian Companies Act, 1956/2013 /Limited Liability Partnership Act 2008, as applicable
  - A Company/LLP is considered as ‘Owned’ by resident Indian citizens if a minimum of 51% of the capital in it is beneficially owned by resident Indian citizens and/or Indian Companies, which are ultimately owned and controlled by citizens holding Indian passports
  - Documents to be submitted in support of 51% eligibility criteria:
    - CA/CS certified document (having UDIN) stating the above
    - Copies of the passports of the Shareholders/Partners may be submitted (if required)
- **Academic Institutions (Government/Private) /Not for Profit Organizations (Other than Indian Companies/LLPs)**
  - This will include legal entities such as Indian Institute, Universities Trusts, Societies, or other organizations established under central or State Statutes.
  - The applicant organization should hold an Affiliation/Registration Certificate or statute reference for establishment/Trust Deed/Byelaws of Society/other relevant document (as applicable) along with the CA Certificate confirming that more than half of its members/trustees/others as relevant are Indian Citizens.
  - Documents to be submitted:
    - In case of Society/ Trust/ NGO/ Foundation/ Association: The following documents will be required in case of Society and Trust: -
      - i. Society**
        - a. Society Registration Certificate
        - b. Byelaws of Society
        - c. CA certificate (supporting the fact that half of the society's members are Indian citizens) mentioning UDIN number.
      - ii. Trust**
        - a. Trust deed and Registration Certificate
        - b. CA certificate (supporting the fact that half of the trustees are Indian Citizens) mentioning UDIN number

- The applicant(s) needs to submit copies of the passports of the members/trustees/others as relevant (if required) in support of 51% eligibility criteria

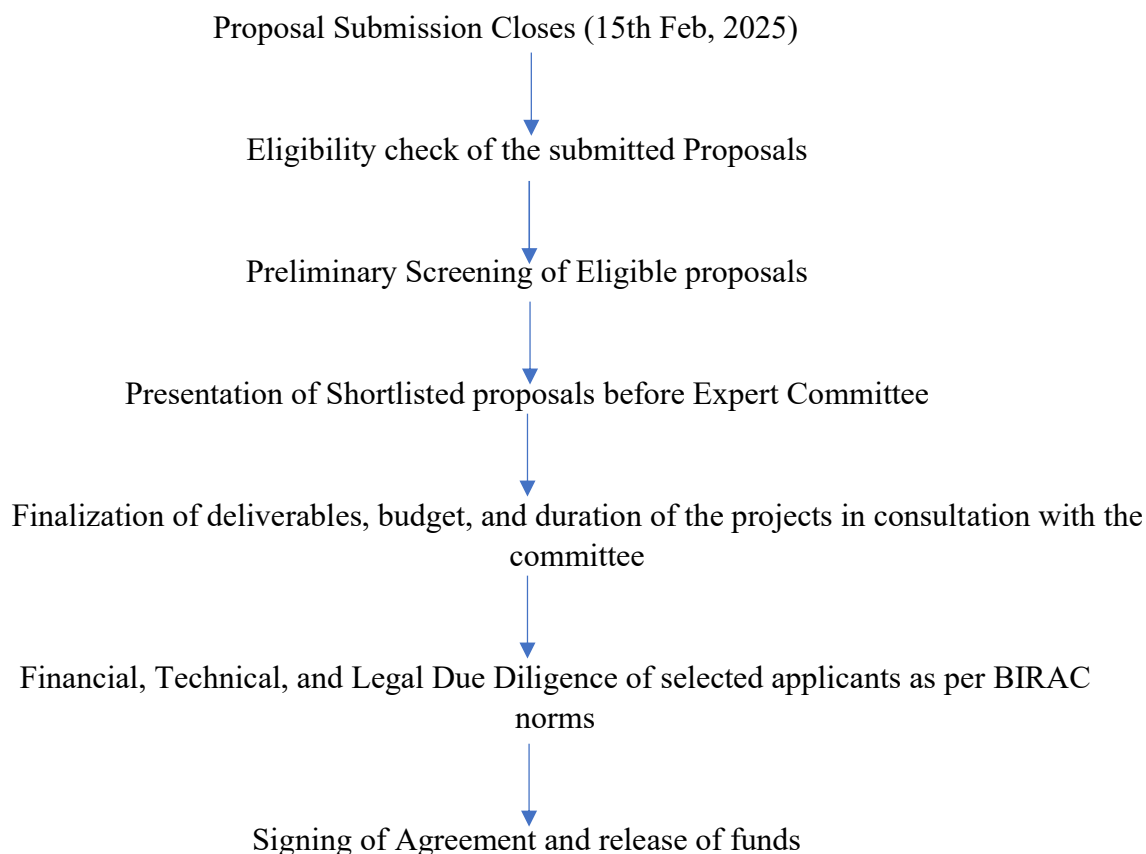
**Note:**

- Collaborative proposals can be submitted
- Any non-profit organisation (NPO) registered as a trust, society, or Section 8 company registered under the Indian Companies Act or any other applicable acts should obtain a DARPAN ID or have applied for it and provide the same upon final selection.
- An applicant, including collaborators, can apply for any one category only

**5. How to apply?**

- Application submission starts: 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2025
- Application submission closes: 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2025
- Applications are required to be submitted online only at [www.birac.nic.in](http://www.birac.nic.in)
- Application should be submitted and represented by a Project Lead Coordinator
- Application should provide Milestone-based deliverables with clear timelines and budget details. Refer to the application form

**6. Selection and Evaluation Process:**



\*Further evaluation steps, if required for the proposal, may be included at the committee's discretion.

## 7. **Selection Criteria:**

### 1. **Eligibility check**

- **Legal and Administrative Compliance:** Submission of the required application form, resume, proof of certifications, and other relevant documents as applicable.
- **Timelines:** Applications received after the last submission date shall not be considered.

### 2. **Preliminary Screening Criteria:**

- **Documentation Clarity:** Completeness and accuracy of submitted application form.
- **Relevance:** Alignment of the proposed activities with the specific category of the BIRAC EDGE Centres applied for.

### 3. **Technical Competencies:** Assessment of the applicant's expertise and experience relevant to the activities proposed.

### 4. **Expert Committee Evaluation:** Eligible Applicants qualifying the preliminary screening shall be called for a face-to-face presentation in front of an Expert Committee.

## 8. **Funding Support and Duration:**

BIRAC will consider proposals for financial support of up to INR 5.0 crore per BIRAC EDGE Centre for a period of up to 5 years and shall cover expenses towards operational activities only. The initial funding period will be up to three years, with the possibility of a two-year extension based on performance evaluation and the availability of funds. The BIRAC funding for the BIRAC EDGE Centres will be done in alignment with the Government's umbrella scheme 'Biotechnology Research Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development' (Bio-RIDE) in the following manner:

### a) **Funding to Private entities:**

- Up to INR Rs. 50 Lakhs as grant-in-aid
- For Projects more than 50 Lakhs: Minimum contribution of 30% will be required for the project cost by the applicant or applicant and collaborator, as applicable

### b) **Funding to Government entities shall be done as per the following categories:**

- **Government Academic Institutions (Centre/State-owned):** Support shall be provided as Grant-in-aid

- **Central Government owned Section-8 company (ies):** Support shall be provided as Grant-in-aid
- **State Government-Owned Section-8 company(ies):** Minimum contribution of 50% from the applicant/applicant and collaborator, as applicable.

Subsequent to the completion of the support period from BIRAC, the Center may consider carrying forward the relevant activities through self-funding and endeavoring to emerge as a center of excellence in a specific category/domain.

#### **9. Royalty/Revenue Sharing:**

In case the selected entity/entities envisages to generate revenue with BIRAC's support under the BIRAC EDGE Center program, royalty/revenue-sharing modalities shall be established based on guidance by the Selection Committee and later on same will be part of the Agreement to be signed between BIRAC and the selected entity(ies).

Further, depending upon the recommendations of the Selection Committee, entities may be required to provide a Performance Bank Guarantee, Corporate Guarantee, Parent Company Guarantee, etc., wherever applicable.

#### **10. Program Review & Monitoring:**

An Expert Committee comprising BIRAC members and external technical experts shall be constituted to screen, select, review, and monitor the program.

The roles and responsibilities of the expert committee shall be as follows:

- a) Selection of applicants based on their presentations and formation of BIRAC EDGE Centers
- b) Monitor the progress of the BIRAC EDGE Centers in conformity with the outputs, milestones, targets, objectives and other terms and conditions as contained in the agreement executed between BIRAC and the BIRAC EDGE Center established under the program
- c) Keep track of funding from any other prospective partner (if later) involved in the activities carried out by the BIRAC EDGE Center
- d) Assess the national and international developments impacting the activities of the BIRAC EDGE Centers
- e) Based on the foregoing, to assess and recommend:
  - i. Milestone-based releases to the BIRAC EDGE Centers by BIRAC
  - ii. Revision of Program Duration and the financial assistance



- iii. Closing, dropping, or altering any of the components of the Program within the overall approved objectives, budget and time frame,
- f) Advise on issues related to any technological problem faced in the Program implementation; and
- g) Advise on any other matter as referred to it by BIRAC and/or otherwise reasonably necessary for the effective discharge of its duties and/or achievement of aims and objectives.

## 11. Scope of IP Generated During the Conduct of The Project

In case a program beneficiary generates an Intellectual Property (IP) while being facilitated by a BIRAC EDGE Center under this program, then the New Intellectual Property (IP) rights belong to the beneficiary. It is the responsibility of the beneficiary to protect the New Intellectual Property (New IP). They shall bear the expenditure involved in protecting the New IP.

## 12. General Guidelines

- The applicant agrees that BIRAC will share information submitted by the applicant to a panel of experts, reviewers, etc. (under confidentiality and no-conflict undertaking).
- Any correspondence with the project lead coordinator will be done **through email only** provided by the applicant when filling out the application form.
- BIRAC shall not be responsible for any late receipt of applications for any reason whatsoever.
- The decision of the committee will be final and binding with regard to selection.
- Information provided at this stage is indicative and BIRAC reserves the right to amend/ add further details in the RFP. BIRAC further reserves the right to include any other item in the Scope of work at any time after consultation with applicants or otherwise. BIRAC reserves the right to relax or waive any of the conditions stipulated in this document as deemed necessary in the best interest of BIRAC without assigning any reasons thereof.
- BIRAC reserves the right to call for any clarifications covered in the broad scope wherever such a clarification becomes necessary for proper judgment in evaluation.
- BIRAC reserves the right to establish more than one BIRAC EDGE Center for any given category or drop any of the specified categories.

- BIRAC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP and to waive any irregularities or informalities in the proposals received. BIRAC reserves the right to reject all applications without assigning any reasons thereof.
- BIRAC reserves the right to cancel this request for proposals and/ or invite proposals afresh with or without amendments, without liability or any obligation for such request, and without assigning any reason.

### **13. Disqualification:**

- Proposals submitted by an applicant defaulting on repayment of loan or royalty (in any scheme of BIRAC) or are irregular with regard to the repayment of installments to BIRAC will be considered ineligible.
- Any Applicant who has withdrawn a proposal after approval from the committee or whose project was foreclosed due to any irregularity would be debarred from submitting fresh proposals for one year.
- BIRAC reserves its right to disqualify promoters/promoting Companies with a track record of legal and financial defaults during due diligence.

### **14. Acknowledgement**

All collaterals for activities conducted by BIRAC EDGE Centers shall comprise adequate branding and acknowledgement of BIRAC's support. This acknowledgement must include a disclaimer clarifying that references to specific activities carried out by the centre do not imply endorsement, recommendation, or any assumption of liability by BIRAC. Furthermore, using the BIRAC logo is prohibited without prior written permission.

### **15. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest:**

- In discharging their duties as Committee members, all Committee members shall observe the Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Confidential Information requirements
- These guidelines apply equally to everyone involved in assessing applications, including, but not limited to, Committee members and Reviewers.

### **16. Disclaimer**

BIRAC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to modify, cancel, terminate, or suspend this call for proposal without prior notice.

For any queries, please write to:

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