



BIRAC-Biotechnology Ignition Grant (BIG) Scheme *For Igniting New Ideas*

I. Key features of the scheme are as follows:

The **Biotechnology Ignition Grant (BIG)** scheme is for potential entrepreneurs from Academia, start-ups or an Incubatee (Researchers, PhDs, Medical degree holders, Biomedical Engg. Graduates) who have an exciting idea which may be in the nascent and planning stage and there is an unmet need for mentorship and initial funding. The Biotechnology Ignition Grant would help to support and nurture these high risk early starters and their concepts.

A. The main aim of BIG Scheme is:

- a. To establish and validate proof of concept
- b. To enable creation of spin-offs.

B. Eligibility:

Company Applicant

- i. Biotechnology start-ups / entrepreneurs with an exciting idea which may be in the nascent and planning stage can apply under this scheme.
- ii. The registered company should have a functional R&D laboratory. If it does not have a functional Lab then the Company must be an Incubatee located in an Incubator.
- iii. A Company is defined as one which is registered under the Indian Companies Act 1956 and in which more than 51 % of the ownership is held by Indian Citizens (not OCI or PIO)*
- iv. Start-up Company is defined as one which is incorporated in the last 3 years from the date of advertisement.

Individual Applicant

- i. The Individual applicant must be Researchers, PhDs, Medical degree holders, Biomedical Engg. Graduates etc.
- ii. Students, Academician and Scientists (Research Institute/University/Public, Not for profit Organization, Private funded) can apply.
- iii. The Individual applicant or team needs to Incubate in an Incubator.



- iv. An Incubator is defined as facility designed for housing R&D driven start-up companies or individual incubatees active in Life sciences. It will provide the incubation space, equipments, mentoring and other required services to start-up companies/individuals for their initial growth.
- v. An Incubatee is defined as an individual or a company located in the Incubator and availing services of the Incubator.
- vi. The applicant has to be an Indian* (not OCI or PIO).
- vii. If the applicant is a professor, student or a researcher working/studying in an institute, then the research/innovation under the BIG scheme cannot be carried out in the institute laboratory. The applicant needs to be either incubated at the Incubator of their own Institute or any other Incubator.
- viii. It is recommended to have a Scientific Advisor for the project however it is not mandatory.

* **Indian:** As per Article 9 of the Constitution of India 1949

Person voluntarily acquiring citizenship of a foreign State not to be citizens No person shall be a citizen of India by virtue of Article 5, or be deemed to be a citizen of India by virtue of Article 6 or Article 8, if he has voluntarily acquired the citizenship of any foreign State.

If the applicant has a project/proposal but has not yet incubated in an Incubator, then it is suggested that the applicant should initiate discussion with the Incubator of their choice before applying for the scheme. The formal MOU/agreement with the Incubator may be signed after their selection under BIG Scheme.

C. Scope & Support

- i. BIG supports projects only in the area of Biomedical Devices, Biotechnology including but not limited to Agriculture, Energy, Green Technology, Healthcare, Diagnostics, Biomaterials, Nanoscience, Computational Biology etc
- ii. The Proposed project should not be a basic research project but should have some commercial prospect.
- iii. Ignition Grant is for high level of innovation.
- iv. BIG scheme supports only up-to Proof-of-Concept stage.
- v. Grant-in-Aid up-to Rs 50 lakh
- vi. Grant period is 18 months.
- vii. Mentoring support and Project Monitoring by BIG Partner



- viii. The funding to the BIG Innovator by the BIG Partner will always be in the form of Grant-in-Aid.
- ix. No royalty will be charged on the disbursed fund to the BIG Innovator by the BIG Partner.
- x. Funding may be used for conducting limited market research, patenting costs, working capital during the period, travel, salary etc.
- xi. This grant is not a research fellowship.

II. Modalities of Implementation:

1. Overview of Application Process:

- a) BIRAC will issue a national call for BIG at least 2 times each year (1st January & 1st July of every year).
- b) The Call for Proposal is advertised in all leading Newspapers and Scientific Journals.
- c) The BIG Scheme is implemented through our Partners called the **BIG Partners**, across the country. The Call will mention the BIG Partners for the particular year.
- d) The applicant needs to submit an online application for funding by registering and logging-on the BIRAC website www.birac.nic.in
- e) The applicant has to select one of the mentioned BIG Partners in their online application form. The applicant Incubatee need not necessarily be incubated with any of these BIG Partners. They may be incubated in any other Incubator.

2. Overview of Selection Process

- a) The BIG Partner will screen the application for eligibility and appropriateness under Biotechnology Ignition Grant.
- b) Eligible applications will be sent for Technical Review by Subject Experts.
- c) Based on the recommendations of the Technical Review the BIG partner will recommend the applications to BIRAC for further scrutiny.
- d) The shortlisted applicants would be then asked to make a detailed presentation to BIRAC Expert Selection (ESC) Committee.
- e) The Committee would recommend the proposal based on the presentation.
- f) The BIG partner would then conduct a Financial & Technical Due Diligence of the recommended applicants and would provide their final recommendation to BIRAC



g) The final selection of the BIG applicants will be done by the BIRAC.

3. The **current BIG Partners** are:

- Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP), Bangalore;
- Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), New Delhi;
- IKP Knowledge Park, Hyderabad

4. The **responsibilities of the BIG Partners:**

- a. To screen the BIG application for Eligibility.
 - b. To conduct the technical review of the shortlisted project
 - c. Recommend project to BIRAC for presentation to BIRAC BIG Expert Selection Committee.
 - d. To conduct technical & financial due diligence of the shortlisted applicant.
 - b. To monitor the targeted milestones and disburse the funds accordingly to the selected BIG Innovator.
 - e. To provide mentorship and handholding for activities related to IP management, legal and contract, mobilizing resources and other business development related activities to all recipients of ignition grant (BIG innovators).
 - f. To organize workshops for the BIG Innovators. To provide a platform for interaction with Senior Experts and other academic Partners.
5. An Annual workshop/meet would be organized by BIRAC, which would be attended by all the recipients of the Ignition Grant (BIG Innovators).
6. The BIRAC-IP Cell can assist the BIG Innovators with IP related services.
7. The BIRAC Legal Cell can provide necessary support for specific contracts and other related activities.
8. The BIG Partners would be authorized to sign an Agreement with the BIG Innovators on behalf of BIRAC. For the management of the Ignition grant, BIRAC will sign an agreement with each BIG Partner for fulfilling the roles and responsibilities.



9. The applicant will receive the fund in a separate auditable account. The selected applicants will have to open a separate bank account in a scheduled bank. The fund disbursed will be milestone based by the BIG Partners.



BIG Operational Mechanism

