

INVITATION FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS On
Mahatma Gandhi NREGA
Guidelines for Research Studies under
(from Invited Institutions)

Last Date for Submission of Proposals: 12.8.2016

1. Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, called as Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is one of the pioneering rights based legislation in the world. MGNREG Act, is a legal guarantee and is marked by scale; with an annual expenditure of more than Rs 38,000 Crore, and implementation in all the states and Union Territories of India. It is the largest workfare programme in the world. After 10 years of implementation, research under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is critical to yield insights on fundamental implementation and possible evolution of the programme changing developmental context in the country.

2. Rationale for Research Studies

Mahatma Gandhi NREGA implementation has been critically scrutinised, over the years, by all stakeholders-citizens, opinion makers, legislators across the political spectrum and policy makers. Two compilations – Sameeksha I and II have anthologised and meta-analysed more than 60 studies on the various aspects of implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA across spatio-temporal variables. Research is critical not only a post-facto evaluation, but more importantly for mid-line course correction as well.

- a. Ever since its implementation across the country (2008-09 to 2015-16), on an average Rs 40,000 Crore per Financial Year has been invested under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. The spending of public money in developing country like India underlines the rationale for research scrutiny. It may be assumed that given the massive investment and mandate of the scheme, the impact of the implementation may be quantifiable. Research that quantifies and thus demonstrates the impact of a strong implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is needed.
- b. A decade of implementation implies that the scheme must evolve in response to the changing nature of society. Thus, projects like Skilling under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA HAVE BEEN INITIATED. As Mahatma Gandhi NREGA contributes in its second decade, research needs to focus on the emerging issues and concerns in the implementation. This is the second rationale for independent research studies on Mahatma Gandhi NREGA.

3. Scope and Coverage of the Proposed Studies

The scope and coverage of the studies should be consonant with all India implementation of the programme. The studies should qualify as evidence that can be presented at appropriate policy platforms.

The broad aims of Research studies under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA should include:

- a. Evaluation of the effectiveness and efficacy of the programme implementation in reference to the objectives of the Act.
- b. Critical Assessments of the policies, processes and operational bottlenecks and recommendations on appropriate modifications required.
- c. Assessments of the new initiatives and special projects like the Cluster Facilitation Team Project, The project LIFE etc.
- d. Assessments of the large interventions by the States such as river rejuvenation projects and their impact on the regional economy as well as ecology.
- e. Assessment of the performance of the various institutions under the Act
- f. Documentation of the Best Practices and scalable models.
(For better elucidation in this regard, a list of suggested themes is presented as **Annexure I.**)

4. Mode of Receiving Research Proposals

- a. Research proposals are invited from the select institutions only.
- b. A detailed research proposal in the prescribed format required to be submitted along with detailed time-frame and budget etc. (The format is attached as **Annexure II.**)
- c. **Only soft copies** of the research proposals are to be submitted to the email: mgnregaresearch.nirdpr@gmail.com along with a letter addressed to The Director General, National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad – 500 030.
- d. The **due date** for receiving research proposals is **12.8.2016.**

5. Cost and Duration of Research Studies

- a. The duration of the research study may be **six to nine months** from the date of sanction accorded. However, given the research investigation required, the duration of the study is negotiable.
- b. The cost estimations of the research study is based on the **norms as applicable in the institutions which apply for research studies.**

6. Appraisal and Sanctioning of the Studies

a. Step 1:

Submission of the proposal in the prescribed format with objectives, scope, research questions, methodology and expected outcomes that feed into the

policy or implementation questions. The proposal should include the detailed budget.

b. Step 2:

Screening of the proposals will be done by the Committees constituted exclusively for the purpose with due determination of the priority of the proposal and relevance of the research.

c. Step 3:

Award of the Study will be followed by release of funds for the awarded research studies. The pattern followed will as follows:

- i. 25% of the approved cost will be released as 1st Tranche at the award of the Research Study
- ii. 50% would be released as 2nd Tranche after receiving the Utilization certificate and the provisional study reports
- iii. 25% would be released at the acceptance of the final report, along with examination of the Utilisation Certificate and the Audit Report.

7. Terms and Conditions for the Sanctioned Research Studies/Projects

- a. The authorities of the institutions(s) will submit account details to receive the grants and be responsible for the utilisation of the same. Project administration, submission of periodic progress reports and accountability to the NIRDPR/MoRD and maintenance of accounts would be the responsibility of the recipient institution(s).
- b. In case, during the course of the study, the Principal Investigator leaves the institute or is otherwise indisposed, the study will be entrusted to an equally qualified Principal Investigator by the Head of the Institution with approval from the NIRDPR/MoRD.
- c. The accounts of the project will be subject to an audit by a Chartered Accountant and the Audit Report will form the part of submission to the NIRDPR/MoRD.
- d. The selection and appointment of the Research staff will follow transparent and due procedures, not exceeding the project timelines.
- e. Requirements of prior approval for publications or conference presentation may be prescribed by the NIRDPR/MoRD.
- f. In the event that, the NIRDPR/MoRD, after due enquiry concludes that the progress of the Study is unsatisfactory and cannot be improved, the study will be terminated and the ward be cancelled. In such an event, all grant, along with the interest should be refunded to the NIRDPR/MoRD within two weeks of such a decision.

- g. The study will become operative from the date of the receipt of the first sanction order. The same would be communicated by the Principal Investigator (PI) to the MoRD.
- h. Within two weeks of the initiation of the research study, the grantee institution would prepare a concept note on the approach of the study to the NIRDPR/MoRD.
- i. NIRDPR/MoRD would conduct a periodic review of the progress and may grant extension if deemed appropriate.
- j. The Final report of the Research Studies will be presented in 5 copies along with a soft copy to the NIRD/MoRD.

8. Quality Assurance

A series of steps and mechanism will be enabled to assure high quality research studies. Some of the steps are:

- a. Pre-research orientation workshop on questionnaire/Schedule designed, methodological aspects etc.
- b. Rigorous field monitoring and supervision in consultation with agencies/institutions identified for undertaking research.
- c. Mid-term appraisal and workshop to discuss an emerging issues and de-bottlenecking.
- d. Post-work completion workshops to discuss on the draft reports generated to arrive at suggestions, if any, to strengthen the reports.
- e. Submission of Quarterly Progress Reports.

9. Research Deliverables and Expected Outcomes

Research and evaluation without dissemination of findings is a non-sequitur. Following are the deliverables and expected outcomes:

- a. A National Level Seminar to disseminate the Research Findings
- b. Compilation of all the research reports in the form of an Edited Book
- c. A mandatory publication in National News Papers and/or International peer reviewed journals, with due acknowledgement to the NIRD&PR and MoRD
- d. A series of policy briefs, submitted to match the administrative review cycles.

Annexure I

Suggested Themes for research on Mahatma Gandhi NREGA

1. The verification, user perception and technical quality assessments of the Assets constructed under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA.
2. Evaluation of the Plantation and Horticulture Activities under MGNREGA and its impact.
3. Assessments of the Convergence Activities under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA assets.
4. Impact of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA participation on poverty alleviation and risks among agrarian households.
5. Multi-region Evaluations of works relating to water conservation and rejuvenation of water bodies including rivers under MGNREGA.
6. Socio-economic evaluation of the beneficiaries of Category B assets and the quantification of the enhancements in incomes and sustainable livelihoods.
7. Impact of the changing demographics and skilling on the participation in Mahatma Gandhi NREGA among participating households.
8. Assessments of methodologies for Time and Motion Studies for the SoRs under MGNREGA.
9. Social Audits and Community Empowerments
10. Impact of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA implementation and trends in distress migration across high out-migration states in India.
11. Assessments of the trends of leakages under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA
12. Assessments of the Financial inclusion under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA
13. Concurrent Authentication of MGNREGA database
14. Vulnerability reduction through Category A and B assets under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA
15. Documentation of successful practices and scalable models

Annexure II
M.G.N.R.E.G.A. Research
Research Proposal Format

1. Introduction

- Describe the research problem
- Give a brief review on relevant literature
- Why the research on the chosen problem is important
- Research Questions

2. Objectives

3. Hypotheses (if any)

4. Research Methodology

- Sampling
- Empirical research methodology

- Justification of Study Area

- Data collection instruments and procedures

- Data analysis

- Presentation of Report

5. Time frames (as per Gantt Chart)

6. Study Team

7. Budget (as per norms of institution submitting proposal)

8. Declaration on authenticity of proposal