



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:

- i. Biotechnology start-ups / entrepreneurs OR Incubatee; Students, Academician and Scientists (Research Institute/University/Public, Not for profit Organization, Private funded) with an exciting idea which may be in the nascent and planning stage can apply under this scheme.
- ii. The applicant must be Researchers, PhDs, Medical degree holders, Biomedical Engg. Graduates etc.
- iii. The Applicant must be either an Incubatee located in an incubator OR have a registered company with a functional R&D laboratory
- iv. If the registered company does not have a functional Laboratory of its own, then it should be incubated in an Incubator which has a functional laboratory.
 - a. 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 (including NRIs)
 - b. Start-up Company is defined as one which is incorporated in the last 3 years.
 - c. 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.

- d. An Incubatee is defined as an individual or a company located in the Incubator and availing services of the Incubator.

C. Scope & Support

- i. BIG is for high level of innovation in the Biotechnology sector.
- ii. BIG scheme supports only up-to Proof-of-Concept stage.
- iii. Funding will be in the form of Grant-in-Aid limited up-to Rs 50 lakh
- iv. The period for the study would generally not exceed 18 months.
- v. The funding to the BIG Innovator by the BIG Partner will always be in the form of Grant-in-Aid.
- vi. No royalty will be charged on the disbursed fund to the BIG Innovator by the BIG Partner.
- vii. Funding may be used for conducting limited market research, patenting costs, working capital during the period, travel, salary etc.

II. Modalities of Implementation:

1. Overview of Application and Selection Process

- a) BIRAC will issue a national call for BIG at least 2 times each year.
- b) The BIG Scheme would be implemented through our Partners called the **BIG Partners**, across the country.
- c) 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 3 BIG Partners in their application form. The applicant Incubatee need not necessarily be incubated with any of these BIG Partners. They may be incubated in any other Incubator.
- f) The eligible applicants will be initially short listed by the BIG partners.
- g) The shortlisted applicants would be then asked to make a detailed presentation to BIRAC Apex Committee.
- h) The final selection of the BIG applicants will be done by the BIRAC Apex Committee.



2. 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](#)
- [KIIT Technology Business Incubator, Bhubaneswar](#)
- [Venture Centre \(Entrepreneurship Development Centre\), Pune](#)

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

- a. To identify and select potential applicants for the Ignition Grant. This could be through special workshops, competitive programmes, network meetings etc. A Technical Committee would be constituted to shortlist such potential applications that fulfil the eligibility criteria.
 - b. To carry out the technical and financial due diligence of the selected applicant.
 - b. To monitor the targeted milestones and disburse the funds accordingly.
 - c. 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).
 - d. The expected deliverables would be readiness of the BIG innovator to move into the next phase of funding – SBIRI, BIPP etc.
4. An Annual workshop/meet would be organized by BIRAC, which would be attended by all the recipients of the Ignition Grant (BIG Innovators), who will then present their work before an Advisory Committee. This will also be a platform for interaction with Senior Experts and other academic Partners.
5. The BIRAC-IP Cell can assist the BIG Innovators with IP related services.
6. The BIRAC Legal Cell can provide necessary support for specific contracts and other related activities.
7. 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.



III. Limiting Conditions

1. If the applicant is a “Registered Company” then company should have been incorporated any time in the last 3 years. Any company registered before 1st January, 2011 is not eligible to apply under the BIG scheme.
2. Proprietorship firm or an Institute is not eligible to apply under this scheme.
3. This grant is not a research fellowship.
4. 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.
5. I am a Scientist in an institute, can I apply?
Scientists are eligible to apply for BIG Scheme provided that there is no conflict with the policies of their Institute. However this fund is not meant to carry out the regular research of the institute. The scientist should carry out the research and development with BIG funds in an Incubator or a lab of their own. An NOC from the institute authorizing the scientist to undertake the TBI (Technology Business Incubator) project should be furnished.
6. I am employed; can I apply for this scheme?
The BIG scheme is meant to encourage entrepreneurship. People working in the private sector can apply for BIG scheme provided they leave their job and meet the other eligibility criteria. However Scientists/professors in any Institute may apply provided there is no conflict with the policies of their institute. However the scientist cannot work in their institute lab. They should be incubated in an Incubator. The grant will be provisionally assigned to the applicant, and funds disbursed only when he/she meets the eligibility criteria.
7. 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.
8. Can a Director/Promoter/Owner/Shareholder of a Company(ies) apply for BIG Scheme?
 - a. A Director/Promoter of a Company is not eligible to apply under the “Individual Category”, if he/she holds stake in the company.



- b. Founder/Owner of a Company is required to apply under Company Category only.
- c. Applicant who is a mere share holder in Company(ies) but not Promoter /Director will be eligible to apply for BIG under Individual Category.
9. Can a Founder/Owner/Promoter of a company starting a new company be eligible for the BIG Scheme?
- A Founder/Owner/Promoter of a company proposing to start a new company will not be eligible if applying under “Individual” Category. Companies within in 3 years of Incorporation will be eligible under BIG.
10. I am a person of Indian origin but hold a foreign passport can I apply?
- No, only Indians or Indian Companies are eligible to apply for this scheme.