

## **Policy for Sponsoring Faculty Fellows Funded by National Programs at GITAM Deemed to be University**

GITAM Deemed to be University (GITAM) promotes innovative research, fostering a culture of academic excellence and intellectual curiosity. The University's research initiatives focus on addressing real-world problems, driving innovation, and advancing knowledge. GITAM's research ecosystem is supported by state-of-the-art infrastructure, collaborative partnerships, and a strong emphasis on interdisciplinary research, enabling it to make significant contributions to its fields of focus. GITAM aspires to be a global Centre of excellence.

National schemes of the Government of India, such as the Ramanujan and Ramalingaswami fellowships, aim to attract and retain highly skilled young Indian scientists and engineers, both from India and abroad, to establish research careers in Indian institutions and universities in India, thereby facilitating a "brain drain" reversal and strengthening the national scientific research ecosystem. Similarly, the INSPIRE faculty fellowship offers contractual research fellowships to young achievers and opportunity for independent research in the near term to emerge as future leaders in science & technology. The schemes offer a financial package to support the fellows' research work, including regular research grants and support for salary costs. The fellowships provide a platform for these researchers to build their own independent research programs and establish themselves at host institutions and universities.

These national research fellows represent a critical resource of highly qualified, skilled, and excellent manpower, particularly in the areas of Science and Engineering, for GITAM University to contribute to its mission of achieving global excellence. It is highly attractive for GITAM to sponsor these highly capable manpower, identified through a very vigorous search by National agencies, to enable them to take residence at GITAM University during the tenure of their fellowships. It is emphasized that GITAM is cognizant that the fellowships are for a finite tenure, and the fellows have to be nurtured by a high level support in their research activities to help them achieve their research aspirations and attain national and international eminence during their stay at the university.

This policy outlines the procedures for sponsoring, hosting, and administering Faculty Fellows at GITAM University during their fellowship tenure at the university.

### **Application Process/ Documentation**

- 1) **Identification of Mentor:** When an applicant for the fellowship or awardee of any such fellowship approaches GITAM through any faculty member or official of the



University to be hosted at the University, a mentor, preferably from among the well-established permanent faculty of the department, may be identified by the Head of the Department in conjunction with the Dean of the School. The mentor should be prepared to share laboratory space and equipment with the Fellow in a collaborative manner, and documentary concurrence should be obtained. It should be noted that the collaboration will be strictly governed by the GITAM Policy on Research Ethics 2025.

- 2) **Internal Review:** The application should be put up to the Dean of the concerned school with the concurrence of the Head of Department and Principal of the relevant school of the University. The Dean, in consultation with the Director, Research and Development Cell, will examine the application from the perspective of maintaining uniformity of standards as well as alignment of the proposed research with the thrust area of the school for approving the application.
- 3) **Approval and Authorization:** Once approved by the concerned school and the Dean, the office of the Registrar of the University will issue the required authorization and documents to enable the fellow to complete his/her application and fellowship documents to the funding agency.

#### **Procedures upon Joining GITAM**

- 4) When the awardee faculty fellow presents himself/ herself initially to join GITAM, he /she will be eligible for the initial facilities available to regular faculty members, such as 15 days of accommodation on campus, etc.
- 5) After undergoing the initial formalities of registering with the Human Resources Department, the faculty fellow will be considered as an employee of the University. The validity of the faculty fellowship and timely joining of the faculty fellow within the allowed deadlines of the concerned funding agency should be verified by the HR department before allowing the faculty fellow to join.
- 6) The faculty fellow will be immediately provided with office space, a suitable office desk and chairs, along with a desktop computer and access to a printer by his /her department (HOD will be the responsible authority).
- 7) CATS will provide the faculty fellow access to email, internet, and the computer network of GITAM. The Fellow will be provided with the e-Resources that a regular faculty member has, such as G-portal, G-Learn, and access to library Resources, etc.
- 8) The Faculty Fellow will immediately submit the joining report and the claim form for the fellowship salary and research components to the funding agency as per the guidelines of the funding agency in the required formats.

- 9) The Director of the Research and Development Cell will be the nodal authority to manage the research funds, fellowship, forward all correspondence and reports, including progress reports, provide Statement of Expenditure and Utilization Certificates to the concerned funding agency.
- 10) An internal project account for the faculty fellowship shall be created within the RDC.

### **Provision of Advance Funding**

- 11) Upon submission of the joining report and claim forms for the funds and obtaining acknowledgement/ approval from the funding agency for the joining, in a proactive measure, the University may consider making an advance to pay the faculty fellow's salary from University funds. These funds will be recouped from the fellowship funds when it is released by the funding agency.
- 12) Depending on the fiscal position of the University, the funds (partially or fully for the financial year) for the research component of the faculty fellow may also be advanced by the University to enable the faculty fellow to make an early start to the research. These funds should be recouped once the funds from the funding agency are received by the University.
- 13) The provision of advance funding of the salary component and if necessary, a part of the research funding may be continued in the subsequent years of the fellowship. Except for the final year of the fellowship, where settlement of the claims by the funding agency will be required to release the funds within the GITAM University. The faculty fellow will initiate an application to the Dean of the School for the advances.

### **Teaching and Administrative Duties**

The following limitations are made with a view to maximize the time for research activities, which will remain the priority for the fellow.

- 14) The Faculty fellow will be assigned by the Head of Department limited teaching duties of up to one 3 credit course and one 2 credit Laboratory during every semester, amounting to a maximum of 7-8 contact hours per week.
- 15) Head of the Department will not assign paper setting, invigilation or evaluation duties to the faculty fellow other than the course being taught by him/her.
- 16) No administrative duties will be assigned to the faculty fellow, unless directly related to the research of the fellow/ equipment utilized by the faculty fellow.



### **Facilitation of Research Activities**

- 17) The faculty mentor shall provide access to the working space and equipment in his control to the faculty fellow, whereby the faculty fellow is enabled immediately to commence his/her research work proposed. The mentor is expected to nurture the faculty fellow as an enabling figure. The mentor and fellow will both adhere to the Research Ethics Policy in their interactions. Any disagreements between the mentor and the faculty fellow will be settled amicably by the Principal/Director/Dean of the School.
- 18) Given the short durations of the fellowship as well as the immediacy of various milestones associated with the approved research plan of the faculty fellow, GITAM University will neither provide an independent research space to the faculty fellow nor expect him/ her to develop it from scratch. He/she is expected to utilize the space, equipment of the mentor, and all other common facilities of the University for his/her research work.
- 19) When the research funds of the faculty fellow have not yet been received from the Sponsoring agency, and no advance funds from the University are available, the School may proactively fund the purchase of some of the consumable materials and also payments for the use of equipment in the University, where user charges are applicable. The faculty fellow should note that such actions by the School will be at the discretion of the Principal/Director/Dean, depending on the school's commitments and funds available at that time, and cannot be treated as a matter of right.
- 20) Any new specialized research area specifically required for the research work of the fellow will be created only if the mentor faculty and/ or other faculty of the department/ school shall strongly support the proposal to create such a specialized research space as a common facility of the department/school. The decision of the Dean of the school will be final in this regard.
- 21) The faculty fellow will be allowed to guide or supervise independently projects/ thesis of UG and PG (Masters) students.
- 22) Faculty fellows may supervise Ph.D. students, subject to compliance with the eligibility criteria for research supervision as specified in the GITAM Ph.D. Regulation (Research Regulations 2023). However, a regular faculty member shall be designated as a co-supervisor. This provision is instituted to safeguard the interests of the Ph.D. student in the event that the faculty fellow discontinues his/her association with the University before the completion of the scholar's



doctoral work. In such cases, the regular faculty member will assume the role of the primary supervisor, while the faculty fellow may continue as co-supervisor, subject to institutional approval.

- 23) The faculty fellow will be permitted to make independent research proposals for sponsored research projects of the Government and private agencies, as well as industrial consultancy projects. All proposals will be required to be forwarded through the office of the RDC, with the concurrence of the school, as applicable. Rules applicable to regular faculty members will apply to the faculty fellow in this context.
- 24) To highlight the research of the faculty fellow, it is desirable that the fellow will be provided an opportunity once every academic year to deliver a seminar/ colloquium on his/her work to the School, which will be chaired by the Dean/principal of the school.
- 25) The faculty fellow will be listed on the departmental web pages under a separate category of Faculty Fellows with a full profile as for regular faculty members.
- 26) The mentor and the officials of the school should be mindful of the limited duration and short time lines of the fellowship, and should minimize the delays caused to the research of the faculty fellow.
- 27) All purchases of materials, equipment, and services by the faculty fellow will be made as per the extant rules and regulations of the University. Similarly, any research staff hired in the fellowship project will be recruited as per the rules and regulations of the University and the funding agency.
- 28) Apart from the statutory requirements of the University, the faculty fellow will maintain two separate stock registers for the permanent non-consumable assets and consumable materials procured by the fellowship funds as required by the funding agency.
- 29) The faculty fellow will be governed by the rules and regulations applicable to a regular Assistant Professor of the University in matters of Leave rules, travel rules, and allowances. The faculty fellow will maintain the attendance, working time requirements, and the calendar approved by the University for faculty members.



**Administrative rules and procedures applicable:**

- 30) The Head of the Department will be the reporting authority, and the Dean/Principal of the School will be the reviewing authority for the faculty fellow.
- 31) While the faculty fellow is not a regular employee of the University, for the sake of clarity and convenience, he/she will be subject to the University's administrative rules and procedures, normally applicable to a regular faculty member of the rank of Assistant Professor.

**Evaluation of Performance**

- 32) The faculty fellow will annually submit a progress report to the University. This will be reviewed by a peer group consisting of the Dean of the School, the Principal / Director of the school, the Head of the Department, and the mentor faculty member. Feedback on the progress made and alignment with the School/Department priorities will be provided. This will enable the fellow in submitting his/her progress report to the funding agency for continuation of funding.

**Future Employment Opportunities**

- 33) The faculty fellow cannot claim any special rights for future employment at GITAM University simply because of the virtue of being hosted at GITAM University.
- 34) The faculty fellow will be allowed to apply for consideration of employment at GITAM University against an advertisement at any time during his tenure of fellowship.
- 35) Depending on the performance of the faculty fellow, and University needs, if found desirable, the University may, at its own discretion and following its statutory processes, make an offer of employment as a regular faculty member at the requisite level of seniority and emoluments. The decision of the competent authority of the University will be final in this regard. While this can be done at any stage during the fellowship, the exercise of determining the suitability of the faculty fellow for a regular position should preferably be made in the later stages of the fellowship.
- 36) Refusal of the faculty fellow to join as a regular faculty member for any reason will not affect or jeopardise GITAM's commitment to host the faculty fellow for the duration of the fellowship with the concomitant facilities.



- 37) Recognizing that the faculty fellowship is an interim stage in the career of the faculty fellow, the University will, in normal circumstances, forward his/her applications for employment elsewhere in a benevolent manner.
- 38) The faculty fellow will be governed by the University policy applicable to regular teaching staff whereby he /she should give a notice period of three months upon resignation. The faculty fellow should also obtain a No-Objection-Certificate (NOC) from the funding agency to leave the University during the ongoing project.
- 39) Wherever the application for academic employment elsewhere has been made with GITAM's consent or the application has been forwarded by GITAM, the University will give NOC to the transfer of the fellowship and equipment purchased entirely out of the fellowship funds for use by the faculty fellow at the location of the new employer, if allowed by the funding agency. The location expenses will be met by the faculty fellow or by the new employer.

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