

F.No.13-52/2018-ICC
Govt. of India
Ministry of Finance
Department of Higher Education
(ICC Cell)

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated the 16th January, 2023

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Minutes of the Apex Committee Meeting of SPARC.

The undersigned is directed to forward herewith a copy of the Record of Discussion of the Apex Committee Meeting of SPARC held on 12th January, 2023 under the chairmanship of Secretary, Higher Education (HE) for information and necessary action.

2. This issues with the approval of Secretary, HE.


(Santosh Kumar Chaubey),
Under Secretary (ICC),
Tel-23072112

To

- i) Prof. M Jagadesh Kumar, Chairman UGC(cm.ugc@nic.in)
- ii) Prof. T. G. Sitharam, Chairman AICTE (chairman@aicte-india.org)
- iii) Shri Sanjog Kapoor, Joint Secretary & Financial Advisor, MoE (jsfa-moe@gov.in)
- iv) Shri Anil Kumar Rai, Joint Secretary (Coordination), MEA(jscoord@mea.gov.in)
- v) Dr. Namita Gupta, Head, INSPIRE (namita@nic.in) & Dr. Sandeep Bansal, Scientist, INSPIRE Division, DST (sandeep.bansal@nic.in)
- vi) Prof. Adrijit Goswami, Dean, Continuing Education, IIT Kharagpur (goswami@maths.iitkgp.ac.in)
- vii) Prof. V.K. Tiwari, Director, IIT Kharagpur (director@iitkgp.ac.in)
- viii) Dr. S. Vaidhya Subramaniam, Dean, Planning & Development, SASTRA University (vaidhya@sastra.edu)

Copy for information:

- i) Shri Vinay Mohan Kwatra, Foreign Secretary (psfs@mea.gov.in)
- ii) Dr. Srivari Chandrasekhar, Secretary, DST (dstsec@nic.in)
- iii) Dr. Rajesh S Gokhale, Secretary, DBT (secy.dbt@nic.in)
- iv) Shri Govind Mohan, Secretary, Ministry of Culture (secy-culture@nic.in)
- v) Prof. Indranil Manna, Professor, IIT Kharagpur (on lien as VC,BIT, Mesra) (vc@bitmesra.ac.in, imanna@metal.iitkgp.ernet.in)
- vi) Prof. Virander S. Chauhan (viranderschauhan@gmail.com)
- vii) PPS to Secretary (HE), MoE
- viii) PPS to JS (ICC)

Minutes of the Apex Committee Meeting of SPARC

The Apex Committee meeting for the Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) was held on 12.01.2023 in Hybrid Mode under the chairship of Secretary (HE). The list of participants is at **Annexure-I**.

2. A short presentation was made by Director IITKGP and Prof Adrijit Goswami regarding issues in SPARC, Progress on resolution of PFMS issues, and evaluation of proposals for Phase II.

3. During the meeting, the following decisions were taken:

- a) IIT Kharagpur shall take a call on the 24 proposals which had a score of less than 6.0 numerical grading during evaluation. Secretary HE reiterated that if those proposals fulfill the objectives of increasing collaboration with foreign partners (specially neighbouring countries) and promote research within the country, then these projects may be considered.
- b) A limit of one proposal per PI may be implemented henceforth.
- c) IITKGP shall send a letter to non-CNA institutes indicating that if they don't comply with the CNA Module, their future projects will not be considered. Current proposals for consideration from these institutes will only be accepted after they have come under the CNA Module and Opened up a Zero Balance Subsidiary Account, while transferring back the unspent balance.
- d) IITKGP shall ensure a regional balance amongst the approved proposals.
- e) IITKGP shall complete re-evaluation formalities within 2 weeks based on the decisions taken today in the apex committee meeting and will share the list of finally identified proposals under phase II so that the projects could be awarded well within time and funds could be released to these new projects by February, 2023. Remaining 215 unevaluated proposals must be evaluated on priority and may be considered in the next round of Phase II itself.
- f) IITKGP shall ensure that all institutes returning funds to CNA do so with interest. Remaining institutes, if any may also be instructed to return the unspent balance lying with them at the earliest.
- g) Slow moving projects may be issued advisory to complete their projects within the time frame.
- h) A database of researchers under SPARC shall be maintained by IITKGP.
- i) IITKGP shall prepare a compendium in both digital and physical format which highlights the outcomes of the scheme and maps the utility of these outcomes (patents, monographs, publications) to the nation.
- j) IITKGP to send a country wise list of all foreign researcher/Pis engaged in SPARC proposals, along with their contacts and a detailed note on the scheme to MEA, wherein MEA shall ensure that Indian Embassies and High Commissions abroad promote amongst the stakeholders and invite these foreign researcher/Pis of the scheme at important events like the Republic Day, etc. This may be done by IITKGP most urgently.

- k) On MEA's advice, it was decided that researchers under this scheme will be encouraged to file patents more rigorously. IIT KGP will provide support and facilitate the applicants, if required.
- l) All invites going from IITKGP shall bear the logo of India's G20 Presidency and AzadiKaAmritMahotsav. IITKGP Shall also promote these in its events.
- m) Third call for proposals under the scheme may be issued ASAP. The call shall also bear G20 logos and branding. IITKGP to share a list of eligible Indian Institutes with UGC and AICTE while issuing call for proposals so that UGC and AICTE may also may promote the scheme amongst eligible institutions through their website.
- n) IITKGP shall conduct a special drive amongst top 100 Indian Universities (excluding Technical Course) to get more proposals under the Humanities Subdomain. He added that these proposals may help supplement our efforts in increasing collaboration with foreign partners under the Twinning, Dual Degree, and Joint Degree guidelines.
- o) Director IITKGP shall give a thirty minute talk in association with UGC regarding SPARC to the Universities at a suitable timing.
- p) The issue of some foreign PIs leaving their parent institute was discussed. It was decided that the same may later be discussed in detail with IITKGP before third call for proposals.
- q) SPARC scheme shall start focusing more on Asian University Rankings, G20 Countries, Global Outreach and neighbouring countries. For this guidelines may be updated.

The meeting ended with thanks to the chair and participants.

Annexure – I

List of Participants

1. Mr K Sanjay Murthy, Secretary (HE), MoE, Chairman
2. Ms Neeta Prasad, Joint Secretary, ICC, MoE, Member Secretary
3. Shri Sanjog Kapoor, JS & FA, MoE, Member
4. Prof. M Jagadesh Kumar, Chairman UGC, Member
5. Prof. T G Sitharam, Chairman AICTE, Member
6. Dr. Namita Gupta, Head, INSPIRE & Dr. Sandeep Bansal, Scientist, INSPIRE Division, Nominee of Secretary DST, Member
7. Shri Anil Kumar Rai, JS(Coord.), MEA, Member
8. Prof. V.K. Tewari, Director, Director, National Coordinating (NC) Institution, Member
9. Prof. Adrijit Goswami, Dean, Continuing Education, IIT Kharagpur (Special Invitee)
10. Mr S.K. Samantaray, DS ICC, MoE
11. Mr S.K. Chaubey, US ICC, MoE
12. Mr Aayush Verma, ASO ICC, MoE
13. Mr Atul Juyal, Liaison Officer, SPARC