

F.No.14/3/2020-IR
Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
Department of Personnel and Training

North Block, New Delhi-110001
Dated: 29th June, 2020

To
All the SICs/ATIs (*As per list attached*)

Subject: Inviting proposals for grants to Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs) and State Information Commissions (SICs) under the various components of the Annual Programme on "Improving Transparency and Accountability in government through effective implementation of Right to Information Act" for the year 2020-21 reg.

The first meeting of the Scheme Monitoring Committee (SMC), Propagation of RTI Act, Scheme of DoPT, (*Improving Transparency and Accountability in government through effective implementation of Right to Information Act*) is scheduled to be held in July, 2020. All ATIs and SICs are requested to submit their proposals complete in all respect in the prescribed proforma (Annexure-I) to the undersigned, "Room No. 215A/II, Department of Personnel and Training, North Block, New Delhi-110001, Telephone 23092759, email: usir-dopt@nic.in" by 25th July, 2020 preferably. A copy of the guidelines is enclosed for ready reference.

2. It may be noted that any proposal for release of the grants/ funds under Annual Programme will be considered only on receipt of Utilization Certificates (UCs) of the previous grants.
3. It is also requested that information for registration of your organization under the Central Plan Scheme Monitoring System (CPSMS) in the prescribed proforma (Annexure-II) may also be furnished.

Encl: As above

Yours faithfully,


29/06/2020
(Rakesh Kumar)

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India
Tel No. 23092356
e-mail: usir-dopt@nic.in

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Guidelines for grants to ATIs and SICs under the various components of the Annual Programme on “Improving Transparency and Accountability in Government through Effective Implementation of Right to Information Act” for the year.

1.0 Introduction

The Right to Information Act was enacted in 2005 with the objectives of making the governance more transparent and accountable. In the last 15 years, an elaborate institutional mechanism has been set up, including setting up of Information Commissions, designation of large number of officers as CPIOs/SPIOs and Appellate Authorities and laying down of detailed guidelines and instructions for dealing with RTI requests, in line with the mandate of the Act. A web portal “RTI Online” has also been launched to facilitate online filing of RTI applications with facility for online payment of RTI fees. DoPT has issued guidelines on 15.04.2013 **and amended on 07.11.2019** for implementation of suo motu disclosures under Section 4 of RTI Act, 2005 by Central Government Ministries/ Departments and has also urged State Government to issue similar guidelines for the state public authorities.

Under the XIth five year plan, a centrally sponsored scheme titled ‘Improving transparency and accountability in government through effective implementation of Right to Information Act’ was launched in August 2010. Guidelines for sanction and release of funds to SICs and ATIs for two components of the scheme namely ‘awareness generation and capacity building’ were issued vide OM No. 1/6/2010-IR dated 16.08.2010. The guidelines were revised vide OM of even number dated 18th July, 2013 and 22nd August, 2014.

The guidelines on the various components of the plan scheme for which financial support would be provided by DoPT to the ATIs and SICs are as follows:-

2.0 Awareness Generation for RTI:

Both Central and State Governments are obligated to create awareness about the provisions of the Act. Financial assistance under this component will be provided to supplant these efforts of State Governments:-

- i. **RTI Week Celebration:** RTI Week is celebrated every year during 5th – 12th October. SICs will be provided financial assistance of up to **Rs. 3.00 lakh** each based on their proposal, for taking up various activities which may include conducting workshops, seminars, press-meets, competition in colleges on RTI related themes, etc. Although expensive publicity through print/electronic media will not be supported. Funds may be used for displaying hoarding, etc. for publicizing the RTI Act.
- ii. **Innovative Awareness Generation Programmes:** ATIs will be provided up to **Rs. 4.00 lakh** each, based on their proposals, for innovative awareness generation activities which may include nukkad natak, use of local folk troupes, development of publicity material in local languages, distance learning programmes, online certificate courses in regional languages, etc. for awareness generation regarding RTI.
- iii. **Organization of Workshops/Seminars:** ATIs will be provided a sum of **Rs. 1.00 lakh per workshop / seminar** organized on RTI related themes such as best practices and success stories on RTI, suo motu disclosure, etc. On the basis of a proposal. The

workshop may include Public Authorities of State/Centre, media persons, Civil Society Organisations, etc.

- iv. **Publication of guidebooks:** ATIs will be provided funds for getting guidebooks published in regional languages.
- v. **Help Line in ATIs:** ATIs may set up help line for answering queries of the general public regarding RTI Act in the respective regional language. Funds would be granted to ATIs based on their respective proposal subject to a maximum ceiling of **Rs. 4,00,000/- per annum in the first year or actual whichever** which would include rental charges for a telephone line, computer system for data storage, salary for the person manning the helpline and stationery, etc. The grants for the subsequent years would be restricted to **Rs. 2,00,000/- per annum**. Such help lines could be set up in collaboration with NGOs working in the field of RTI.

3.0 Support for Capacity, building – Training of SPIOs/CPIOs and First Appellate Authorities (FAA).

State ATIs will be supported for undertaking training of SPIOs/CPIOs and AAs in a cascade model. In the first instance, ATIs will train District Resource Persons (DRPs) who will in turn train SPIOs/CPIOs and AAs in the districts.

- (i) **Training of DRPs:** This training will be organized at the ATIs. It is planned that **3 DRPs per district will be trained** in a year. Financial assistance will be provided for these trainings up to **Rs. 2000/- per participant per day for a residential course**. The duration of the course should be of minimum 3 days and atleast 2 nights. Selection of DRPs will be made by ATIs.
- (ii) **Training of CPIOs/SPIOs, AAs and staff of State /Central Govt. Officers:** These training programmes will be conducted at the district headquarters by the DRPs under the overall supervision of the ATIs. Each course will be non-residential and will be of **2 day duration**. Financial assistance up to **Rs. 1000/- per participant per day** will be provided to ATIs based on a detailed proposal. This will cover all the incidental expenses involved in the training such as on refreshments for the participants, honorarium to DRPs, hiring of audio visual equipment and other contingencies. The training programmes must also include a segment on record management.
- (iii) **Training to Nodal Officers (RTI) of State Public Authorities:** ATIs shall organize one day training programme for atleast **25 RTI nodal officers** of public authorities in each programme regarding the implementation of DoPT guidelines dated 21st November, 2013 and 7th November, 2019 on suo motu disclosures, particularly on implementation of templates for disclosures at various levels. Financial assistance up to **Rs. 1000/- per participant per day** will be provided to ATIs.
- (iv) ATIs may avail an additional assistance of up to **Rs. 3.00 lakhs for preparation of training material** and for meeting administrative contingencies based on their proposal and the training load.

4.0 Simplification of processes for filing of RTI- The facility of filing RTI applications and appeals online through RTI online web portal has been launched and is being implemented in all the Ministries/Departments of Government of India situated in New Delhi. The same facility can be extended to the State Government offices by sharing with them the software developed by NIC (Headquarters), New Delhi. The ATIs may play the role of catalyst in the implementation of the facility in the Public Authorities located in the state. Proposals in this regard are invited from ATIs and funds would be granted on the basis of such proposal.

5.0 Improved record management /Suo motu disclosure- In order to attend to RTI requests promptly, it is necessary to index and store records properly. Similarly, suo motu disclosure

would help in disseminating as much information as possible to the public which would obviate the need to seek information through RTI. GOI has issued guidelines on suo motu disclosure under Section 4 of RTI Act, 2005 to be followed by the Ministries /Departments of GOI. It would be desirable that such guidelines are adopted by the State Governments as well. DoPT would grant funds under this scheme as follows:-

(i) If any State Government is willing to implement these guidelines in their respective Public Authorities, ATIs can do the necessary handholding of the PAs. Proposals are invited from ATIs in this regard and financial assistance required for such handholding shall be provided to the ATIs based on their proposals.

(ii) ATIs can also conduct audit of suo motu disclosure of Public Authorities in their respective states either themselves or through an NGO/agency. Funds would be granted to ATIs to conduct such audit based on their proposals.

6.0 Institutional mechanism for collaborative working with CSOs and Media: DoPT would provide funds upto Rs. 5 lakhs (in each case) for field based study/ research on RTI. The ATIs may invite proposals for field based study/ research on RTI from Civil Society Organisations or individuals. Proposals found suitable may be submitted to DoPT for final selection. Funds would be granted by DoPT only for the selected proposals. Mentoring for the study/ research would be provided by the ATIs.

The terms of payment for the research work will be as follows:-

- (1) On acceptance of the research proposal : 20% of the approved amount.
- (2) On submission of draft report : 60% of the approved amount.
- (3) On acceptance of final report : 20% of the approved amount.

The timelines for the research work is as follows:-

Submission of draft report: 5 months from the date of acceptance of proposal.

Submission of final report: Within a month from the date of submission of draft report.

7.0 Sanction and release of Financial Assistance:

SICs and ATIs are required to submit detailed proposals for seeking financial assistance for 2020-21 under the scheme, as per proforma at Annexure-I. The proposal must include detailed cost estimates for various activities and the time-lines for physical achievement. Scheme Monitoring Committee (SMC) will review the proposals and sanction assistance.

Funds will be released to ATIs and SICs directly as per the following:

- (i) Funds will be released only if UCs for funds provided to the SIC (for awareness generation activities) or the ATI (for training/ awareness generation/ capacity building), as the case may be, for **2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19** have been received .
- (ii) Subject to (i) above financial assistance would be released in one instalment immediately upon sanction, and receipt of UCs (in GFR 19 A format), receipt of financial and physical progress.
- (iii) The UCs for the grants that would be given in the **financial year 2020-21** would become due in **March 2022**. However, further funds in **2021-22** would be released only on receipt of UCs and statement of physical achievement for the financial year **2020-21**.

8.0 The first meeting of the SMC is scheduled for the **first week of August, 2020**. All complete proposals received in DoPT by **25th July, 2020** will be processed and put up before SMC. SICs

and ATIs are requested to submit their proposals in the prescribed proforma as soon as possible. In case, any information/clarification is required Smt. Varsha Sinha, Director (IR) may be contacted. Contact details are given below.

9.0 These guidelines are in supersession of OM No.1/6/2012-IR dated 22nd August, 2014 and are duly updated.

10.0 Proposals may be sent in the prescribed proforma (Annexure) to Smt. Varsha Sinha, Director (IR), Room No. 279A, Department of Personnel and Training, North Block, Tel. 23092755, email-varsha.sinha@nic.in

Application Proforma

Annual Programme on Improving Transparency and Accountability in Government through effective Implementation of Right to Information Act.

To be submitted in five copies	
The format given below should be neatly typed on separate sheets giving item-wise information	
Application in an incomplete form will not be entertained	
A	
1.	Component for which assistance sought (Para of guidelines to be mentioned)
2.	Institution-SIC/ATI/CTI
B	
Details of Institution	
1	Name of the Institution
2	Particulars of the Institution
	Complete postal address
	Telephone Nos.
	Fax Nos.
	E-mail Address
3	Particulars of Nodal Officer
	Name
	Designation
	Tel and Fax No. (including mobile no.)
	E-mail id
4	Bank Details:
	Bank Name and Branch
	Name of Account Holder
	Account No.
	IFSC Code
	MICR Code

* Note: A cancelled cheque may be enclosed.

Details of Proposal		
1	Proposed ACTIVITIES	
2	Time Lines	
3	Detailed estimates of expenditure activity wise	
4	Total amount of grant required	

D. It is certified that:-

1. All funds related under the Annual Programme on 'Strengthening Capacity Building and Awareness Generation for the effective implementation of the RTI Act' and "Improving Transparency and Accountability in Government through effective Implementation of Right to Information Act" in the previous years have been fully utilized for the purpose for which they were related and Utilization Certificates have been submitted alongwith statement of physical achievement.

2. Once the estimates of expenditure are approved as reasonable and the grant assessed on the basis of these estimates they shall not be modified by the institution without prior approval of the sanctioning authority of the grant.

(Signature)-----

Name of the Officer-----

Designation-----

Note: Should be signed by DG/Director in case of ATI and by Secretary in the case of SIC.