

**Central Sector Scheme of
National Fellowship for OBC Students**

Scheme Guidelines:

I. Background

Government of India had launched a Central Sector scheme namely, National Fellowship during the financial year 2014-15 to increase opportunities for the students of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) for pursuing higher education leading to their acquiring degrees such as M.Phil. and Ph.D.

The scheme aims at providing financial assistance to the OBC students in obtaining quality higher education leading to degrees such as M.Phil and Ph.D in universities, research institutions and scientific institutions. This will not only enable them to be eligible for employment to the posts of Lecturers lying vacant in various colleges and universities but will also equip them to effectively take advantage of the growing opportunities at the national and international level in the context of the new economic order.

II. Scope of the Scheme

The scheme is designed to provide a total number of 300 Junior Research Fellowships per year from the year 2014-15 onwards and 300 Senior Research Fellowships during 2016-17 to Other Backward Class (OBC) students. The scheme covers all universities/institutions recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and is implemented by the UGC itself on the pattern of the scheme of UGC Fellowships being awarded to research students pursuing M. Phil. and Ph.D.

III. Implementing Agency

The UGC is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme and notifies the scheme by releasing advertisements in the Press at a suitable date.

IV. Eligibility

- (i) Any student belonging to Other Backward Class (OBC) category who has been admitted to M.Phil./Ph.D. course in a University or academic institution after completing the required formalities of admission in that University or academic institution is eligible for the award of Fellowship subject to provisions of the scheme as per the advertisement of UGC.
- (ii) After two years, if the progress in the research work of the awardee is found satisfactory, his/her tenure will be extended for a further period of three years as Senior Research Fellow (SRF). The research work will be assessed as per the UGC norms. The total period of award of JRF and SRF shall not exceed a period of 5 years. The fellowship will be paid from the date of registration of the student in the M.Phil./Ph.D. course.

- (iii) Students belonging to Other Backward Class (OBC) category once considered eligible for the fellowship shall not be entitled to any other benefits from Central or State Government or any other body like UGC offering similar benefit to avoid duplication and increase coverage. Only those, doing regular and full time M.Phil./Ph.D. course of a University/Research Institution shall be eligible for the fellowship. Employees of any University/College/Educational Institution/Central/State/UT Government shall be excluded from availing Fellowship, even if they are on Study Leave or EOL to pursue the M.Phil./Ph.D. course.

V. Number of Fellowships

- (i) The total number of fellowships to be awarded to the Other Backward Class (OBC) students under the scheme is 300 as per details given at para-II. In case of non-availability of adequate number of Other Backward Class (OBC) candidates, the number of fellowships not availed during a year will be carried forward to the next academic session.
- (ii) In case, the number of candidates exceeds the number of available awards, the UGC will select the candidates based on the percentage of marks obtained by the candidates in their Post Graduation Examination.

VI. Duration of Fellowship

Name of the Course	Maximum duration	Admissibility of JRF and SRF	
		JRF	SRF
M. Phil	2 years	2 Years	Nil
Ph.D	5 years	2 years	Remaining 3 years
M.Phil + Ph.D	5 years	2 years	Remaining 3 years

VII. Rate of fellowships

- (i) The rates of fellowship for JRF and SRF will be at par with the UGC Fellowships. Presently these rates are as follows:

Fellowship in Science Humanities and Social Science	@ Rs. 25,000/- p.m. for initial two years (JRF)
Fellowship in Engineering & Technology	@ Rs. 28,000/- p.m. for remaining tenure (SRF)
Contingency for Humanities & Social Sciences	@Rs.10,000/- p.a. for initial two years @ Rs.20,500/- p.a. for remaining tenure
Contingency for Sciences, Engineering & Technology	@ Rs. 12,000/- p.a. for initial two years @ Rs. 25,000/- p.a. for remaining tenure
Departmental assistance (All subjects)	@ Rs.3,000/- p.a. per student to the host institution for providing infrastructure
Escorts/Reader assistance (All subjects)	@ Rs.2,000/- p.m. in cases of physically and visually handicapped candidates

- (ii) The House Rent Allowance (HRA) will be on the UGC pattern and will be payable to those students who are not provided with hostel accommodation. In case

hostel accommodation offered by the university/institution is refused, the student will forfeit his claim of HRA. Other facilities such as medical facilities, leave including maternity leave will be governed as per the guidelines of the UGC in case of their fellowship programme.

VIII. Procedure for applying for National Fellowship for OBCs

- i. UGC is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme.
- ii. UGC will notify the scheme by inserting suitable advertisement in the press.
- iii. UGC will implement the scheme once it is approved by the Government.
- iv. It would be sufficient for an OBC candidate to have passed the Post Graduation Examination for being eligible for the National Fellowship.
- v. There is no restriction to the effect that a OBC candidate should have cleared NET/SLET examination for being eligible for receiving the Fellowship.
- vi. UGC will give one month's time to the candidate for applying for the Fellowship.
- vii. UGC shall disburse the scholarship amount to the candidates through Bank Smart Cards.
- viii. UGC will also issue a booklet containing all the details about the scheme, for the benefit of prospective candidates.
- ix. UGC will evolve its own mechanism for verifying the genuineness of the OBC certificates furnished by the candidates in order to eliminate the possibility of students availing of the Fellowship on fake certificates.
- x. The decision of the UGC in regard to awarding the Fellowship shall be final and no appeal could be filed against it.
- xi. In case the numbers of fellowships so allocated to a State/UT are not fully utilized, due to non-availability of eligible candidates, the UGC will allocate the slots amongst the other States/UTs where the number of eligible candidates is much more than the slots allocated to that State/UT. A Committee consisting of the representatives of UGC and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment will take this decision.

IX. Monitoring & Evaluation

The expenditure on evaluation/monitoring of the fellowship programme shall be met out of the funds provided for this scheme. Award of SRF done after appropriate evaluation of performance in carrying out the research work by the candidate in the Junior Fellowship phase.
