

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

IMPRESS scheme has been launched to promote Social Science Research in the countryNew Delhi, December 17th, 2018

The Government has approved “Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education by 2022”, as per which the scope of institutions to be funded through Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) has been enlarged to encompass School Education and Medical Education institutions, apart from Higher Education. The total authorized equity capital of HEFA has been raised to Rs.10,000 crore, with the facility to leverage additional resources from the market, based on requirement. A total Government equity of Rs. 6,000 Crore, has been approved. All funds for educational infrastructure in centrally funded educational institutions will henceforth be in the form of ten year loans through HEFA to the institution, the interest liability of which would be borne by the Government. The principal repayment would be undertaken by the institutions in part or full depending on their age profile and financial capability. For new institutions and those which have limited internal fund generating capacity, the entire principal and interest repayment would be undertaken by the Government. There is an additional window of financing for school and medical education institutions where the sponsoring Department would undertake to repay the principal and interest to HEFA. So far, HEFA has approved projects of Rs. 24430 Crore with total loan amount of Rs. 12307 Crore.

The Government of India, in August 2018, had sanctioned the scheme “Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS)” at a total cost of Rs. 414 Cr for implementation up to 31.03.2021. Under the Scheme, 1500 research projects will be awarded for 2 years to support the social science research in the higher educational institutions and to enable research to guide policy making.

- The Indian Council of Social Science and Research (ICSSR) will be the project implementing agency.
- The broad objectives of the scheme are:
 - (i) To identify and fund research proposals in social sciences with maximum impact on the governance and society.
 - (ii) To focus research on (11) broad thematic areas such as : State and Democracy, Urban transformation, Media, Culture and Society, Employment, Skills and Rural transformation , Governance, Innovation and Public Policy, Growth, Macro-trade and Economic Policy, Agriculture and Rural Development, Health and Environment, Science and Education, Social Media and Technology, Politics, Law and Economics. The sub- theme areas will be decided on the basis of Expert Groups’ advice before notifying the scheme and calling for applications.

- (iii) To ensure selection of projects through a transparent, competitive process on online mode.
 - (iv) To provide opportunity for social science researchers in any institution in the country, including all Universities (Central and State), private institutions with 12(B) status conferred by UGC.
 - (v) ICSSR funded/ recognized research institutes will also be eligible to submit research proposals on the given themes and sub-themes.
- The following will be the modalities for implementation:-
 - (a) There will be (4) calls for proposals- October, 2018, February 2019, September 2019 and February 2020. The process of evaluation of the proposals and selection will be completed within 90 days from the date of call for proposals.
 - (b) The experts for evaluation of proposals will be persons of eminence and selected using objective criteria.
 - (c) There will be a regular monitoring of the progress of projects using the online portal, in which the progress can be directly updated by the Project Coordinator.
 - (d) There will be a third party evaluation of the projects in March 2021.

This information was given by the Minister of State (HRD), Dr. Satya Pal Singh today in a written reply to a Lok Sabha question.

NB/AKJ/LS-1014