

SCHEME FOR ASSISTANCE FOR EXPERIMENTAL AND INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMES FOR THE EDUCATION AT THE ELEMENTARY STAGE INCLUDING NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

(Revised on March 2008)

The background:

The National Policy on Education (NPE) was approved by Parliament in May, 1986 and the Programme of Action (POA) for its implementation in August, 1986. These documents spell out the immediate, medium-term as well as long-term goals of educational development, and also the strategies to be adopted for the achievements of these goals.

2. NPE aims at Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) by 1995, the targets by 1990 being confined to provision of five years of education to all children through formal schooling or the non-formal stream. The strategy for implementation of UEE has three inter-related components: (i) adoption of child-centered and activity-based learning system; (ii) a thorough reform of the content and process of education, including emphasis on values referred to in para 3.4 of NPE: and (iii) a large and systematic programme of non-formal education for children of habitations without schools, working children and girls who cannot attend whole-day schools. While POA sets out some of the aspects of the action plan: it makes clear that a variety of experimental and innovative programmes will be taken up to explore, further parameters and techniques suited in the various situations and contexts. Creation of mechanisms for supporting experimentation and innovation, particularly for UEE, is implicit in NPE and POA.

Objectives:

3. The overall aim of this scheme is to promote experimentation and innovation for the achievement of goals spell out in NPE for UEE. Within this overall aim, the specific objectives of the scheme are as follows:

(a) To identify agencies which can take up experimental and / or innovative programmes in furtherance of the goals set out in NPE / POA;

(b) To provide financial and administrative support to the selected agencies for the activities taken by them;

(c) To review and evaluate the work of the agencies taking up experimental and / or innovative programme: and

(d) To disseminate the findings in respect of methods, processes and outcomes in respect of the various programmes of experimentation and / or innovation.

Eligibility:

4. (A) Government agencies, educational institutions, panchayati raj institutions, registered societies, public trusts and non-profit making companies would be eligible for assistance under this scheme. Ordinarily, agencies which are not legal entities would not be eligible:

(B) As far as the voluntary agencies, public trusts and non-profit making companies are concerned, in order to be eligible for financial assistance under this scheme they should;

(a) have a proper constitution or articles of association;

(b) have a properly constituted managing body with its powers and duties clearly defined in the constitution;

(c) be in a position to secure the involvement on voluntary basis, of knowledgeable persons for furtherance of their programmes;

(d) not be run for profit of any individual or a body of individuals;

(e) not discriminate against any persons or group of persons on the ground of sex, religion, caste or creed;

(f) not directly function for the furtherance of the interests of any political party;

(g) not in any manner incite communal disharmony;

(h) not proselytise; and

(i) eschew violence.

(C) In exceptional cases, a registered society of a public trust fulfilling requirements spelt out in (B) above may be given assistance for mobilization, involvement and provision of financial support to other voluntary agencies, social activist groups and individuals;

(D) Only those eligible agencies which have been in existence for 3 years would be considered for assistance under this scheme. This requirements may be waived in respect of agencies with specially qualified workers or which can otherwise justify a special consideration.

Note:- The Grant-in-aid Committee should carefully examine the credentials of the “lead organisation” and satisfy itself as to its reliability and capability. The criteria for assistance by the “lead organization” to other agencies, its responsibility for proper utilisation of funds by the implementing agencies and the nature of its accountability should be clearly laid down in the sanction.

Nature of assistance:

5. (a) taking up well-designed field projects;
- (b) development of learning materials, instructional / learning aids, and other aspects of technical resource development;
- (c) training;
- (d) creation of infra-structure for taking up experimental / innovative programmes;
- (e) meetings, conference, seminars to promote innovation and experimentation;
- (f) management expenses essential for action under paragraph 5 (c);
- (g) evaluation of experimental / innovative programme.

(h) Activities for dissemination of the outcome of experimental / innovative programmes and their adoption, including visits to experimental innovative projects, publications etc.

Educational Innovation:

Educational innovation refers to an idea or practice new to a specific educational context that meets unsatisfied needs. It is the introduction or promotion of new ideas and methods that are devised in education and / or school practices which have a substantial effect on changing the existing patterns of behaviors of a group or groups involved. Innovative strategies imply the development of new ideas which are disseminated and utilized: they usually occur in response to particular problems.

Characteristic of an educational innovation:

(a) It introduces a new or novel element which deviates from existing structures and / or procedures and is oriented towards the values of the society.

(b) Its specific objective and / or purpose is relevant to the needs of the community and related to national development.

(c) It has potential for diffusion on a large scale and is renewable from time to time based on appropriate feedback and the context for adoption and adaptation.

(d) The innovative process should involve a scientific approach before being either accepted or discarded.

(e) During the experimental stage, an innovation should permit flexibility on the basis of monitoring and evaluation.

(f) It should be both cost and time effective communicable and able to be implemented in other parallel situations. Replicability, with or without adaptation should be a criteria for innovativeness.

(The above working definition of an educational innovation and the description arrived at

the Thirteenth Regional Consultation Meeting on the Asia Pacific programme of educational innovation for development held at Jamtien, Thailand in June, 1992 was adopted by the Grants-in-aid Committee for experimental and innovative programmes in its meeting held on 23.07.1999).

6. If any agency is already receiving or expecting to receive grant from some other official source for a project for which application is made under this scheme, the assistance under this scheme will be made after taking into consideration the grant received, or likely to be received from such other official source. It should also be ensured that an agency already in receipt of a recurring grant from any other official source, central or a state, should not transfer any part of that liability to a grant to be sanctioned under this scheme.

7. Assistance may be sought for such duration as the applicant agency may consider appropriate. Ordinarily, such assistance will be provided for the period necessary for the position of the experimental / innovative programme proposed to be taken up, but not exceeding the balance of a Five Year Plan period at a time. Indication in regard to the period for which grant has been approved would be given in the letter of sanction.

8. Assistance under this scheme will ordinarily be 100%. However, where the Grant-in-aid Committee considers it necessary it may require the agency concerned to make a contribution.

The Procedure:

9. (a) Application: - Any agency eligible to receive assistance may make an application in the form appended hereto. The applications should be addressed to the Ministry of HRD (Department of Elementary Education & Literacy), Government of India, New Delhi through the State Education Department (with a copy endorsed directly to the Ministry).

The State Government should give its views, within a period of three months, regarding the agency's eligibility, suitability, relevance of the proposal and the capacity of the agency to implement it, etc. Comments should be sent by the State Government even if the proposal is not recommended, giving reasons therefore. Applications for extension of the project will not be required to be sent through the State Government. It would, however be necessary for the voluntary agency to send a copy of its request for extension of the project to the State Government by Registered AD Post. All India organisation may make applications directly to the Ministry.

(b) Grants-in-aid Committee:- The applications for grant-in-aid would be considered by a Grants-in-aid Committee to be appointed by the Ministry. Ordinarily, the Committee will go by the advice of the State Government. However, in the event of the State Government not making any recommendations or while considering cases in departure from the advice of the State Government, a representative of the State Government and, if necessary also of the agency making application, will be invited to discuss the proposal with the Committee.

(c) Release of Grant:- on approval of the project, the grant shall be released to the agency on an annual basis in two instalments – the first one shall be released immediately after the issue of the sanction. After the agency concerned has utilized 75% of an instalment, it may make a request for release of the subsequent instalment along with a progress report and statement of expenditure. Release of grants in the second and

subsequent years will be made on a similar basis, provided that before release of the second instalment in a particular financial year (beginning with the second year) the utilisation certificate and audited statement in respect of the grant released till the end of the preceding year shall be furnished.

(d) Disbursement:- Grant for programmes undertaken by Government institutions will be provided to the State Government / Union Territory Administration according to the normal procedure. Grant payable to a voluntary agency, public trust, non-profit making company etc. would be remitted to it directly, by a demand draft / Cheque drawn in its favour by the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

Conditions of Grant:

10. (i) The grant receiving agency will be required to execute a bond on a prescribed form (appended). The bond should be supported by two sureties if the agency is not a legal entity.
- (ii) An agency in receipt of financial assistance shall be open to inspection by an officer of the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development / or National Council of Educational Research and Training or the State Education Department.
- (iii) The accounts of the project shall be maintained properly and separately and submitted as and when required. They should be open to check by an officer deputed by the Government of India or the State Government. They shall also be open to a test check by the Comptroller and auditor General of India at his discretion.
- (iv) The audited accounts together with utilisation certificate in the prescribed form duly countersigned by the Chartered Accountants are required to be furnished within six months in respect of a preceding year or after

expiry of the duration for which grant is approved.

(v) The agency shall maintain a record of all assets acquired wholly or substantially out of Government grant and maintain a register of such assets in the prescribed proforma. Such assets shall not be disposed of, encumbered or utilized for purpose other than those for which the grant was given, without prior sanction of the Government of India. Should the agency cease to exist at any time, such properties shall revert to the Government of India.

(vi) When the State Government / Government of India has reason to believe that the sanctioned money is not being utilized for the approved purpose the payment of grant may be stopped and the earlier grants recovered.

(vii) The institution must exercise reasonable economy in the working of the approved project.

(viii) The grantee agency shall furnish to the Ministry of Human Resource Development reports as may be prescribed.

(ix) The decisions of the Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Elementary Education & Literacy, on the question whether there has been breach or violation of any of the terms and conditions mentioned in the sanction letter shall be final and binding on the grantee.