

No.5/1/2024-IR-I
Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
Department of Personnel and Training

North Block, New Delhi
Date: 4th July, 2024

To

All the State Information Commissions (SICs)
and Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs)

(through website/ email)

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 2024-25 Reg.

Sir/ Madam,

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 2024-25 are invited. ATIs and SICs are therefore requested to submit their proposals, complete in all respect in the prescribed proforma (Annexure) to the undersigned, "Room No. 278A, Department of Personnel and Training, North Block, New Delhi-110001, Telephone: 2304 0401, email: usir-dopt@nic.in" within 15 days from the notification of this letter. 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. Further, ATIs are requested to intimate the schedules of the proposed training well before time so that DoPT Officials may be deputed to visit during the training.

Encl: As above

Yours faithfully,



(Dilip Kumar Jha)
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India
Tel No. 2304 0401
e-mail: usir-dopt@nic.in

Guidelines 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 2024-25:

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 16 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.

The guidelines on the various components for which financial support would be provided by DoPT to Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs) and State Information Commissions (SICs) under the Annual Programme on “Improving Transparency and Accountability in government through effective implementation of Right to Information Act” 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 nataks, 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. Amount fixed (2.5 lakh) rate 250/- per book maximum 1000/-
- 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 with Headwise breakup limited only for maintenance purpose**. Such help lines could be set up in collaboration with NGOs working in the field of RTI. Helpline staff maximum 4 is admirable. Salary head 50000.

3.0 Support for Capacity, building – Training of SPIOs/CPIOs and First Appellate Authority (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 days 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 regarding for at least **25 RTI nodal officers** of public authorities in each programme regarding the implementation of DoPT guidelines dated 21st November, 2013 and 07th 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 filling of filing 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 property. 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. Government of India 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 Public Authorities. Proposals are invited form 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 2024-25 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 previous years up to 2023-24 have been received .
- ii. Subject to (i) above, financial assistance would be released in one installment immediately upon sanction, receipt of UCs (in GFR 12C format as per GFR 2017), and receipt of financial and physical progress.
- iii. The UCs for the grants that would be given in the **financial year 2024-25** would become due in **March 2025**. However, further funds in **2024-25** would be released only on receipt of previous UCs and statement of physical achievement for the financial year **2023-24**.

8.0 The first meeting of the SMC is proposed to be scheduled in **August, 2024**. All complete proposals received in DoPT by **19th July, 2024** 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, Under Secretary (IR-I) Department of Personnel and Training, New Delhi may be contacted over Telephone No. 2304 0401.

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 Under Secretary (IR-I), Room No. 278A, Department of Personnel and Training, North Block, New Delhi-110001, Telephone: 2304 0401, email: usir-dopt@nic.in.

Application Proforma

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

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
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
	MICRO Code

C	
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 this Scheme on 'Annual Programme on 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 along with 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.

A cancelled cheque may be enclosed.