

CONSULTANCY SERVICES AT ASSAM AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, JORHAT

Introduction

With increasing importance of agriculture in national and international trade, new opportunities have opened up for effective and efficient transfer of knowledge, skills and technologies to the end- users. The changed times are more encouraging and rewarding than before for our scientists and staff. New opportunities can be more enriching for research and development work in terms of both, application of expertise as well as revenue generation to the individual and institutions. It is felt that interactive processes through consultancy services for external agencies shall further:

- i) Enhance research and education capability,
- ii) Improve core competencies, work efficiency and environment; and
- iii) Augment visibility of our professional strengths.

Scope of Consultancy Services

Consultancy shall mean professional services rendered to external agencies in terms of scientific, technical, engineering or other professional advice/assistance based on the expert knowledge and skill available at AAU. All consultancy services at AAU shall be institutional and shall be in the area of expertise of the individual(s).

Consultancy services can *inter alia* include:

- i. *preparation of literature/survey/feasibility studies/state of art project/technology forecasting/ evaluation reports;*
- ii. *interpretation of test results and data, advising on risks and hazards or similar skilled advice;*
- iii. *advisory tasks in preparation, evaluation and implementation of a project;*
- iv. *advisory tasks in design engineering related to agriculture and allied sciences;*
- v. *assistance in management of biotic and abiotic stress issues and other problems;*
- vi. *technical advice even in the form of one time assistance to help in trouble shooting or problem solving, mainly advisory in nature, including pilot plant/up-scaling trials for technology validation and commercialization.*

Consulting is envisaged as an activity to assist an external organization in finding a solution to specific scientific/technical/managerial problem(s) or performing a task for it in return for pecuniary consideration in whatever form. A consultancy project, however, is to be distinguished from a research project and any technical work requiring research and development activity with substantial use of institutional infrastructure and time of the staff shall be taken up as contract research rather than consultancy. Inclusion of scientists and staff in their official capacity in boards/committees/bodies of national/government/public sector institutions within the country shall not be considered as consultancy services.

Processing of the Consultancy Services

1. ***Understanding the proposal for selection of the leader and team of consultant(s).*** Consultancy assignments involve high level skill, work efficiency, and scientific and systems approach, and contributes to image building of the institute/system. Therefore, decision on selection of the personnel should be made on the basis of the nature of work involved and capability of particular persons, and not on the basis of hierarchy. At the same time, total work in hand with an individual is also to be considered. Thus, a fair distribution of consultancy work should be ensured so that it is not confined to a few and specific individuals. The client may approach the Director of Research (Agri), AAU for consultancy services, and the consultancy project should be evolved through mutual discussion between the client and the expert(s).

2. **Outlines of work and terms of reference in the consultancy proposals to be completed.** After a decision, the outlines of work and terms of reference will as per the level of information desired and the facilities needed. The procedures and programmes to be followed should be mutually agreed upon.
3. **Limitation to consultancy by an individual.** An individual scientist/staff will not be allowed to accept consultancy for a total period exceeding 50 days in a calendar year. If in an individual case, the total period of consultancy in a year exceeds 50 days, approval should be taken from director for relaxation on merit.
4. **Leave requirement for undertaking consultancy.** In each case of consultancy, the question whether leave of the kind due or extraordinary leave has to be taken and granted shall be critically examined in the Institute. In case the consultancy work requires significant absence from normal duties of the individual, the leave has to be applied for by the individual.

The PME cell of AAU shall process and keep record of the consultancy services with respect to the Institute. It shall ensure that the proposal is in conformity with these rules and guidelines, and submit the proposal to the competent authority for approval in the proforma prescribed in Annexure I. Consultancies with UN/CGIAR bodies or other similar bodies can be settled/approved only through letters instead of proforma details. Proposals should be processed and decision taken as early as possible, preferably within one month of the initiation.

Competent Authority to Approve Consultancy

- i. *Proposals with national agencies upto Rs. 50 lakhs- Director of Research (Agri), AAU*
- ii. *Proposals with national agencies beyond Rs. 50 lakhs –Vice Chancellor, AAU, Jorhat*

Costing of Consultancy Project

The costs for consultancy projects shall be worked out after taking into account expenses connected with the consultancy proposal, intellectual fees, and any other costs specific to the proposal, including mandatory taxes (such as service tax) as applicable which shall be paid by the client. The client may offer a lump-sum payment as the project/consultancy cost.

The expenses related to a consultancy proposal shall consider all operational expenses (such as TA/DA) and any other Direct Costs or any other cost specific to the project if applicable; intellectual fee and service tax.

The minimum charges should ideally be equal to the charges for man-days, except in case of consultancy offered against open tenders, where the intellectual fee could be decided by the competent authority keeping in view the potential competition.

Sharing of Intellectual Fees

Before the sharing of intellectual fees, it should, however, be ensured that all expenses incurred in connection with the consultancy project are recovered first. Thereafter, the intellectual fees including such fees received in the form of honorarium/ consultancy fees/consultancy charges etc. shall be shared, subject to the provision of annual ceiling, as per details given below.

Item	Share
Consultant(s)	75%
Institutional income	25%

This amount would not include travel charges, per diem charges, incidental charges or hospitality offered by the client to the consultant(s) directly. The consultant(s) charges (70% as above) shall be divided among the overall consultant team as deemed appropriate, considering the role of team members constituting the consultant team.

The manpower charges would vary for different categories. The minimum per day rates chargeable shall be one-days' gross salary of the concerned scientist/staff, and appropriately rounded off. In case of longer duration projects, mandays cost may be charged on the basis of effective

number of days to be devoted to carry out the work.

TA/DA cost

Comprise payments on travel and daily allowances of the ICAR staff visiting/travelling for the work related to training, consultancy, contract research and/or contract service. The Institute should recover from the client at least the actual expenditure incurred by it on TA/DA to its staff deputed for work relating to project and ensure that the TA/DA and per diem allowances are not less than that of prescribed by AAU.

Consumables/chemicals/glassware/raw materials /components cost

Should be charged at 100% cost.

Equipment usage costs

The element of depreciation of assets will be taken into account while fixing charges for use of equipments etc. owned by the Institute; and charges for usage shall be based on *pro-rata* basis on an annual usage charge @ 20% of cost of equipment and installation.

Institutional charges (cost of physical inputs/services/utilities)

The expenses are incurred towards physical inputs/services/utilities incurred by the institution for activities such as to provide infrastructure facilities (electricity, water, gas, steam etc.), bench space, building, farm and machinery, workshop; and administrative and fiscal management services etc. Therefore, each project can be charged @ 10% of the total cost of the project; commensurate with the activities envisaged in the project.

Insurance cover

It would be pertinent to provide extra insurance cover for the scientist/staff members working in the sponsored consultancy and contract research. Appropriate financial provision for the same may be kept while working out the costs of a project.

Contingencies

The quantum of contingency charges would vary for each project as may be mutually agreed between the Institute and the sponsor. However, estimated contingency charges up to 10% of total project costs are normal.

Intellectual fee

Intellectual fee reflects charges for the investment made by AAU over the period of time, in building up and sustaining the extant level of expertise, skills, knowledge base and facilities. The amount may be offered by the external agency, or proposed by the consultant(s)/institute, or may even be mutually decided between the two parties. However, the reasons, justifying the concession should be specifically indicated in the project proposal put up for approval. The intellectual fee shall be distributable as honorarium to staff as provided in individual chapters.

Taxes payable

All taxes shall be charged, as applicable in Govt. of India regulations, on the date of receipt of payment and have to be adjusted/debited to the project account.

Ceiling on benefit sharing payments. Each financial year, from 1st April to 31st March, shall be considered as the annual period. The powers for payments up to Rs.10 lakhs per annum as share of benefit to an individual shall rest with the Director of Research (Agri), AAU, while any payments over and above Rs. 10 lakhs per annum shall be reviewed in the PME Cell.

- b. Transfer of biological material(s) to the collaborator/sponsor. Yes/No
- c. Use of genetically modified organisms. Yes/No
- d. Use of environmentally or otherwise hazardous material(s). Yes/No
- e. Use of radioactive materials. Yes/No
- f. Field surveys/trials/proving/collection/testing (give location). Yes/No
- g. Ethical issues in conduct of the project. Yes/No

If answer to any of the points from (a) to (g) is 'yes', the consultant to give undertaking to abide by relevant and extant ICAR/national regulations and guidelines on the subject.

15. Total outlay of the project:
(Provide break-up for different Operational Heads as given below)
 1. Direct Expenses (including TA/DA cost); if any:
 2. Intellectual fee:
 3. Any other cost specific to the project if any:
 4. Service tax:
16. Schedule of payment of fees (indicate amount of each instalment, due date of payment and bank guarantees)
17. Intellectual fees payable to the consultant(s), a brief of calculations with reasons:
18. Whether Intellectual Property Rights issues are involved in the consultancy project. If yes, are they in conformity with ICAR's IPMTT/C Guidelines; if not, the variation be indicated and explained with justification for approval of the competent authority.
19. Whether a written communication/Agreement indicating the Terms of Reference has been received from the external agency. If yes, enclose a copy along with comments; if no, provide justification.
20. Detailed project document: (*Enclose*)

Certified that the overall institutional/organisational or national interests do not suffer in any way with the acceptance of the consultancy project.

**(Signature)
Consultant(s)**

(To be forwarded by Head of Division, in institutes where applicable)

Recommendation of PME cell:

1. Certified that the proposal has been considered as per procedure and is found to be in conformity with the ICAR rules and guidelines.
2. It has been examined and ensured that:
 - i. the acceptance of the project is befitting the academic status of the Institute. Yes/No
 - ii. the amount of all charges and intellectual fee offered is commensurate with fees chargeable as per costing guidelines. Yes/No
 - iii. the return to the Council/Institute is commensurate with the potential and likely gains to the client as a result of transfer of in-house knowledge, skill or technology. Yes/No
 - iv. the project would contribute to the knowledge and professional competence in the Institute. Yes/No
 - v. In case(s) the answer to any of the questions from i to iv is 'no', please provide justification.
3. Any other comment:

**(Signature)
PME cell I/c**

In cases where Director is the competent authority for Approval
Approval of the Director of Institute:

**(Signature) Director of
the Institute**

