

F.N. -01/01/2023-Coord.  
Government of India  
Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare  
Department of Agricultural Research and Education

Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi  
Dated: 02<sup>nd</sup> April, 2024

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

**Sub: Comprehensive Guidelines for the Foreign Visits of the Scientists/ Officials of ICAR**

The undersigned is directed to forward herewith the Comprehensive Guidelines for the Foreign Visits of the Scientists/Officials of ICAR. These guidelines are issued in suppression of all the previous guidelines on the subject and will be effective from 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2024.

2. In view of the above, all the scientists/officials of ICAR are requested to submit their foreign visit proposals, in accordance with these Comprehensive Guidelines.
3. This issues with the approval of Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

  
(Anil Singh)

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India  
Tel: 011-23046633  
E-mail: usic1.dare-agri@gov.in

Encl:A/a

To,

1. All DDGs & Independent ADGs in ICAR
2. All Directors/Project Directors of ICAR Research Institutes/PDs/Bureaus/NRCs
3. All Director/DS in DARE
4. All Under Secretaries in DARE
5. JS (Finance)/JS (TS)/JS(Pers)/Director (Admin) in ICAR Hq.
6. Sh. Mukesh Kumar, Pr. Scientist, ICAR- Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI), New Delhi – for making necessary corrections in FVMS portal of DARE-ICAR and also request to post the guidelines on the FVMS portal.

Copy for information:

1. PS to HAM
2. PPS to Secretary, DARE
3. PPS to Additional Secretary, DARE
4. PPS to AS&FA, DARE/ICAR
5. Guard File

## **Comprehensive Guidelines for the foreign visits of the scientists/officials of ICAR**

Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is dealing with the cases relating to the foreign visits and deputations abroad of the scientists/officials of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). In order to streamline the procedure of examining such cases and to make these visits more effective, the existing set of guidelines/instructions on the subject have been comprehensively reviewed.

In suppression of all the previous guidelines on the subject, the consolidated and revised guidelines, as follows, are issued for strict compliance by all scientists/officials of ICAR:

A. Classification of Visits:

A1. Official Visits

A2. Personal Visits

B. Eligibility conditions related to study visits/ fellowship/ trainings/ workshop/ seminars/ study tours/ consultancy /scholarships etc.

C. General instructions

D. Rescheduling of the deputation proposals

E. Guidelines related to consideration of applications/proposals for foreign assignments made in response to open advertisement/vacancy announcement by International Organization

F. Delegation of Powers for deputation abroad i.r.o. ICAR/DARE personnel

G. Schedule of Procedure (SoP) for processing the foreign visit proposals in FVMS portal

### **(A) Classification of Visits:**

#### **A1. Official Visits:**

The following cases will be treated as official visit:

##### **a) Direct invitation to scientists/officials**

I. When invitations are directly received by scientists by virtue of their expertise in a particular field **for presenting a paper or delivering a lecture** it shall be treated as official visit, provided that;

- (i) The research paper etc. has been submitted through proper channel i.e. with the approval of the competent authority [in case of the institute by Director concerned and in case of ICAR Hq., by DG, ICAR], in ICAR and,
- (ii) The subject matter of the conference/research paper is relevant in the context of the official duties entrusted to the scientist and,

- (iii) Such visits are at no cost to Govt. of India i.e. fully funded by the organisers and,
- (iv) Presentation of the paper will enhance
  1. The brand image of ICAR/Institute
  2. Institutional knowledge through feedback from international peer groups and experts.
  3. Scope for international cooperation in Agricultural Research & Education.
  4. Further, the paper presentation shall create awareness about the good/quality research undertaken by Indian Scientists.

**Note: In case of ICAR scientists/officials, attending conferences/meetings/ workshops [other than presenting a paper or delivering a lecture] direct invitations will not be entertained . Only invitations addressed to DG/Secretary, ICAR will be accepted for processing/approval of nomination by competent authority (DG, ICAR in case of ICAR HQ and concerned DDG, in case of the Institute).**

- II. If any scientist/official gets direct/personal invitation and if the funding for the visit has been approved/ sanctioned by Department of Biotechnology, Department of Science and Technology or any other Government organizations, the same may be treated as official subject to prior nomination by Secretary(DARE).
- III. Even department within the Ministry of Agriculture and, sometimes Ministries within the Government of India call/nominate ICAR scientists/officials for meetings/conferences etc. by name. In such cases where a representative of DARE/ ICAR is required to be a part of delegation of other Ministries/Departments/Organisations, the invitations will be required to be addressed to Secretary (DARE) for prior nomination.

**b) Invitation received by ICAR and/or ICAR selects/deputes a scientist/official suo-moto (without invitation) for a foreign deputation provided that**

- I. Invitation is addressed to DG/Secretary, ICAR and nomination is duly approved by the competent authority in ICAR (DG, ICAR in case of ICAR HQ and concerned DDG, in case of the Institute). The cases, which require approval of nomination by DG, ICAR, shall be routed through proper channel i.e. concerned DDG/ADG (independent), as the case may be, and Secretary, ICAR.

However, in case a ICAR scientist is being nominated/deputed for presenting a paper or delivering a lecture, the following conditions are also to be fulfilled:

- (i) The research paper etc. has been submitted through proper channel i.e. with the approval of the competent authority [in case of the institute by Director concerned and in case of ICAR Hq., by DG,ICAR], in ICAR and,
- (ii) The subject matter of the conference/research paper is relevant in the context of the official duties entrusted to the scientist and,
- (iii) Presentation of the paper will enhance
  - 1. The brand image of ICAR/Institute
  - 2. Institutional knowledge through feedback from international peer groups and experts.
  - 3. Scope for international cooperation in Agricultural Research & Education.
  - 4. Further, the paper presentation shall create awareness about the good/quality research undertaken by Indian Scientists.

**Note: Upon nomination only, the applicant in FVMS portal would submit the foreign visit proposal.**

#### **A2. Personal Visits:**

The visits of the scientists/officials going abroad for personal purpose like tourism, visiting relatives etc. will be dealt by the leave sanctioning authority in accordance with extant instruction in this regard. The following cases will be treated as personal visit:

- a) Scientists going abroad for paper presentation in seminars, workshops, delivering lectures, and if such paper is not recommended by the Prioritization, Monitoring and Evaluation Cell (PME) of Institute.
- b) Scientists going abroad for paper presentation in seminars and workshops, or delivering lectures, where such paper has been recommended by the Prioritization, Monitoring and Evaluation Cell (PME) of Institute, but the expenses are borne by the scientist/official herself/himself.
- c) Personal visits of the scientists/officials of ICAR for personal purpose like tourism, visiting relatives etc., shall not be processed in FVMS. However, personal visits of the scientists/ officials of ICAR for the purpose such as attending meeting, conference, workshops, presenting paper, delivering lectures etc. shall be processed in FVMS.

#### **(B) Eligibility conditions related to study visits/ fellowship/Trainings/ workshop/seminars/ study tours/ consultancy/ scholarships etc. abroad:**

- a) Long term- 6 months and more  
Short term- less than 6 months

- b) Minimum years of service: The scientist/official should have cleared the probation period.
- c) In case of long term deputation, the scientist/official concerned shall execute a bond as per the terms and conditions decided by the respective cadre controlling authority in ICAR.
- d) Upper Age Limit: For fellowship/ associateship/training/study visit, the upper age limit shall be 54 year at the time of commencement of programme. However, in case where foreign Government/ Institution prescribes a different upper age limit for a programme, the same will prevail.
- e) For meetings/study tours/ seminars/workshops etc. abroad which are of less than 15 days of duration, the upper age limit of 54 years will not apply.
- f) Cooling off conditions:
  - i) A scientist/official having attended a foreign training programme of a duration of 15 days to one month will be required to complete a 'cooling off' period of two years before such a scientist/official can be considered again for foreign training;
  - ii) Scientists/officials deputed for training abroad of a duration of more than one month and up to six months are required to complete a 'cooling off' period of three years;
  - iii) Scientists/officials deputed for training programmes abroad of a duration of more than six months are required to complete a 'cooling off' period of five years before being considered for a short-term training programme.
  - iv) Only one long-term foreign visit training programme can be availed during the service career.
  - v) The 'cooling off' condition will not apply for foreign visit training programmes of a duration of less than 15 days'
  - vi) Project-related foreign training /official visit abroad, irrespective of duration, are exempted from the provisions of 'cooling off'
- g) The number of deputation cases should not exceed 10% of the total strength of ICAR scientists at any point of time and during the calendar year from ICAR Hqs/ICAR Institutes and ICAR as a whole.
- h) Preference of nomination: Scientists/officials who have earlier attended training programmes abroad may be nominated again for another training programme abroad only if other suitable scientists/officials who have not attended any foreign training programme earlier are not available.
- i) The total period of deputation permitted for proposals other than fellowship/ associateship/training/study visit/visits under approved project should not exceed more than 45 days subject to a ceiling of four official visits abroad per scientist/official in one calendar year. For the visits exceeding above mentioned limits, the proposal shall be submitted to Hon'ble Agriculture Minister for approval, irrespective of rank/level of the scientist/official.
- j) The Director/Head of the Division will give an undertaking regarding the fact that the normal work of the concerned individual will not suffer during the period of his/her deputation.

k) The period of associateships/ trainings/fellowships/scholarships etc. availed by ICAR scientist/personnel would be regularised as under:

- I. Fellowships/Scholarships/Trainings/Associateships offered through nodal Ministries of Government of India and other Prestigious Fellowships: Fellowships/Scholarships/Trainings/Associateships/long and short terms trainings offered through Government of India Department/ Government of India funded agencies and prestigious fellowships through open advertisement and offered after due global selection process by National/International agencies shall be treated as On Duty with full salary and allowances up to one year and the remaining period, if any, may be adjusted by granting leave of the kind due and admissible, subject to II.

Sl.No.	Fellowships/Scholarships/Trainings/Associateships
1.	BOYSCAST Fellowships
2.	DBT Associateships (Now DBT Crest Award )
3.	Netherland Fellowships Programme
4.	JICA Fellowships in Japan
5.	INSA Fellowships under Bilateral exchange programme
6.	Indo US visiting fellowships
7.	Fulbright Nehru Fellowships
8.	ICAR International Fellowships
9.	EICA Fellowships
10.	DAAD Fellowships
11.	Erasmus Mundus Scholarships
12.	Endeavour Research Fellowships
13.	SIDA Training Programmes
14.	Alexander Von Humboldt (ABH) Fellowships
15.	Rothamsted International Fellowships
16.	Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellowship Program by USDA-FAS

II. Where the Nodal Ministries/Department of Government of India have specifically prescribed about the treatment of period of foreign visits in their terms and conditions, the same shall prevail.

III. Fellowships/Scholarships/Trainings which do not fall under category (I) & (II) above:

Trainings/Fellowships/Associateships/Scholarships directly secured or offered by the sponsors, which do not fall under category (I) & (II) above even though applied for through proper channel shall be considered on "Leave due and admissible". The period of leave in such cases will ordinarily not exceed one year.

I) All consultancy proposals of the scientists of the ICAR will be dealt in accordance with the ICAR Rules and Guidelines for Professional Service Functions (Training, Consultancy, Contract Research and Contract Service) dated 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2014.

### (C) General Instructions:

- i) Political Clearance is required in all the cases irrespective of level of scientist/official and shall be applied by the scientist/official himself.
- ii) FCRA clearance shall be obtained, if applicable, by the scientist/official himself.
- iii) For those cases, which are processed/approved in ICAR, the necessary request/authorization letter to MEA/MHA for political/FCRA clearance, shall be signed by an officer designated by IR division, ICAR.
- iv) If a scientist/official of ICAR while participating in any event (conference, meeting, workshop etc.) during his/her foreign visit presents/shares any inputs/data/opinion/policy/statement, which has bearing on India's position on international forum, such inputs/data/opinion/policy/statement shall require prior approval by DARE.
- v) As per Ministry of Finance Office Memorandum No.4(4)/E. Coord/2015 dated 5/1/2016 all Ministries/Department shall upload data related to foreign visit on the online Department of Expenditure-Foreign Visit Management System (DoE-FVMS) which has been developed and can be accessed at the URL notified at the Department of Expenditure website. Hence, concerned Sections in DARE dealing with foreign visits should ensure that such data is uploaded in the online DoE-FVMS. This is also applicable to autonomous organization like ICAR for foreign visits funded from the budget of the Union Government.
- vi) As per Ministry of Finance Office Memorandum No.4(4)/E. Coord/2015 dated 5/1/2016 "each SMD/Institutes shall prepare a Quarterly Rolling Plan (QRP) of proposed programmes/ visits for the Full Year. For every three months, the Quarterly Rolling Plan (QRP) of proposed programmes /visit should be submitted by the concerned SMD to Technical Coordination (TC) division in ICAR, who will further upload the details in the DoE-FVMS. The visits which are known and which will be financed from funds from the budgetary resources of the Union Government including grants to ICAR shall be subject to such exercise. The visits which emanate from occasional invitations/requests to DARE/ICAR or individual scientists should not be part of such rolling plan.
- vii) In respect of objective that can be achieved through exchange of letters/tele/video conferencing or representation from our Mission abroad, no foreign visit need be undertaken. The recommending authority shall give adequate reasons that without the foreign visit in person, the objectives of the project/organization etc. may not be achieved.
- viii) The size of the delegation should be kept as small as possible. No delegation for foreign travel should exceed five members nor should the duration exceed five days. In cases where these numbers have to be exceeded due to unavoidable reasons, detailed justification may be given for processing the proposal for approval of Hon'ble Agriculture Minister.
- ix) When two or more scientists/officials are going to participate in the same conference/meeting/workshop etc. abroad [other than direct invitation cases as mentioned in para A1. a) I. of Classification of Visits ], the nomination of all such scientists/officials shall be processed **together** by the concerned SMD\*

for approval of the competent authority (DG, ICAR in case of ICAR HQ and concerned DDG, in case of the Institute\*\*) in the e-office file.

*\*In case the officials/scientists belong to more than one SMD, the SMD, having major relevance to the topic of the event shall process the case*

*\*\* In case of a combination of Institute and HQ official/scientist, the competent authority to approve the nomination will be DG, ICAR*

- x) Participation of scientist/official in International Fairs/exhibition/workshop and conferences are generally discouraged. If considered essential, only the scientist/official directly dealing with the subject shall be deputed.
- xi) Vigilance clearance for the ICAR central cadres (PAN-ICAR cadres) would be provided by the competent authority of ICAR/DARE in all cases irrespective of personal and official visits.
- xii) All the proposals related to the foreign visits of the scientists/officials will be required to be submitted at DARE- ICAR FVMS portal, at least 15 working days before the departure date. The complete proposal in all respects (as per the revised FVMS SOP) should reach DARE at least 7 days before the departure date.
- xiii) In case of foreign visit under any MOU/Work Plan, the details of components of visit & financial arrangement under this MoU/Work Plan shall be provided.
- xiv) The visit of scientists/officials of PSUs/Autonomous Bodies are exempted from Screening Committee of Secretaries (SCoS) procedure, as mentioned in O.M no. 4(4)/E.Coord/2015 dated 05.01.2016 issued by DoE, Ministry of Finance, unless they form a part of a composite delegation from the Administrative Authority.
- xv) All scientists/officials of ICAR to ensure that the timeline stipulated for submitting the proposal for foreign visits requiring SCoS and Hon'ble Prime Minister's approval are received 15 days prior to departure date of the delegation but not later than 05 days before date of departure of the delegation at SCoS. Proposals not adhering to the time frame will be liable to be rejected.
- xvi) The expenditure on the foreign visit of scientists/officials of Ministries/Department shall be borne by Government only, even if the visit of the scientist(s)/official(s) is in his capacity as ex-officio member of ICAR, and in connection with affairs of ICAR. Any proposal for relaxation in this regard shall be referred to Secretary (Expenditure)
- xvii) There shall be no objection in accepting international air travel cost and hospitality from an international body of which India is a member or the visit abroad is covered under bilateral/multilateral agreement or under a regular exchange programme. The terms and conditions on deputation shall not be supplemented with the terms and conditions on deputation offered by Government of India viz. the mode and class of travel. Payment of cash allowance and other allowances including local travel and stay in hotel would be as per the terms offered by foreign Government/sponsors.
- xviii) The leader of the delegation, or in case of non-delegation visits the individual scientist/official, shall upload the tour report, containing inter-alia the major achievements from the tour and post-visit outcomes, duly countersigned by Director of the Institute (in case of institute scientist/official) or DDG/ADG

(Independent) (in case of Director or subordinate Hq. scientist/official), as the case may be, in the requisite format, on DARE-ICAR FVMS portal. A copy of the same shall also to be marked to sanctioning authority as well as to ADG (IR) for proper monitoring and follow-up of these reports by IR division. IR division shall ascertain the impact of the visit and monitor the action taken by ICAR of the recommendations/suggestion. IR division shall submit a quarterly report, inter-alia having above points, to DARE within 10 days after the end of each quarter, for kind perusal by the competent authority.

- xix) Visit of non-officials at Government cost will require approval of PM. Their visits are to be routed through SCoS only if they form a part of a composite delegation. In other cases, the PM is be approached (through PMO) by the administrative Ministry directly.
- xx) The scientists/officials of ICAR headquarters shall not, in normal circumstances, undertake any foreign visits during the parliament sessions unless it is absolutely unavoidable.

**xxi) Online Participation in International events :**

1. For online participation in international conferences/seminars/trainings etc., approval of the competent authority (DG-ICAR in case of ICAR HQ and concerned DDG in case of Institute) will be sought by the concerned scientist/official.
2. For presenting a paper in online mode, it has to be ensured by the concerned scientist/official that research paper has been submitted through proper channel as mentioned in para A1.a) I(i) of Classification of Visits.
3. If a scientist/official of ICAR while participating in these virtual events presents/shares any inputs/data/opinion/policy/statement, which has bearing on India's position on international forum, such inputs/data/opinion/policy/statement shall require prior approval by DARE.
4. Political Clearance is required in all the cases and shall be applied by the scientist/official himself, as mentioned in point no. (i) above.

***All the proposals of scientists/officials of ICAR related to foreign visits shall be processed in light of these Comprehensive Guidelines. However, in case of the scientist/ official of ICAR institutes, recommendation of the Prioritization, Monitoring and Evaluation Cell (PME) of Institute and subsequent approval of Institute Deputation Committee (IDC) shall also be required to be enclosed with the proposal.***

#### **D) Rescheduling of the deputation proposals of scientist/official on account of changes in their date**

Concerned Director in DARE will be the competent authority for approval of rescheduling of the deputation cases of the scientists, providing the following conditions are fulfilled:

- i. The proposal does not involve any change in the duration of the visit;
- ii. There is no change in the venue of the training/place of visit already approved; and
- iii. The proposal for rescheduling should reach DARE/ICAR with in three months from the date the original approval was conveyed to the Institute; and
- iv. In case the proposal for rescheduling is submitted after three months from the date of original sanction, fresh proposal may be submitted in FVMS.

All rescheduling cases will be processed through FVMS portal.

**E) Guidelines related to consideration of applications/proposals for foreign assignments made in response to open advertisement/vacancy announcement by International Organization/foreign Governments /Agencies including FAO of the United Nations will be followed in accordance with the Circular No. File Number 1-49/2002-IC-II dated 4th October, 2002 of DARE.**

#### **F) Delegation of Powers for deputation abroad i.r.o. ICAR/DARE personnel**

The delegation of powers issued by the department vide F.N.6-3/2014-Estt. Dated 13th June, 2014 are also being revised and will be issued in due course.

#### **G) SoP for processing the foreign visit proposals in FVMS portal**

As per **Annexure-1**

**Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)**  
for  
**DARE-ICAR Foreign Visit Management System**  
**(DARE-ICAR FVMS)**

DARE-ICAR Foreign Visit Management System (DARE-ICAR FVMS) has been developed and implemented at DARE/ICAR to facilitate processing of applications for foreign visits of scientists/officials of ICAR for various purposes. The system was already made functional from 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. 2019 in DARE, ICAR Hq. and in all its institutes. In order to maintain and operate the system in a transparent and effective manner some changes have been made in existing SOP and following revised Standard Operating Procedure (**effective from 15.04.2024**) has been approved by the competent authority:

1. Nodal Officer in Division of Computer Applications, IASRI will be responsible for managing DARE-ICAR FVMS.
2. Nodal Officer shall ensure that all the reports from the system are generated as per the attached pro-forma. The data in these reports shall be duly vetted by the concerned Director/DS (DARE).
3. All correction/modification in FVMS software containing design, labels, data structure, data, functionality, etc. shall be affected by the IASRI development team only after vetting of Secretary (DARE) & DG,ICAR.
4. To maintain the reliability and quality of the data, the software should be enhanced so that various updates on routine basis can be done in a separate test instance and once the updates are complete and reviewed by the Secretary (DARE) & DG,ICAR; these can be migrated to the production instance of FVMS.
5. All FVMS operating officials will access their respective module through the website <https://fvms.icar.gov.in> with their respective username and password.
6. All ICAR employees will apply for foreign visit(s)/trainings/fellowships through FVMS system with their respective ICAR email id (@icar.gov.in) and password.
7. Proposal's status, approval status and sanction letter generation status can be traced through provided link in applicant's login module.
8. Once sanction letter is uploaded in FVMS module, an auto generated email will be sent to Director of Institute (for the institute scientists/officials) and to Secretary, ICAR (for Hq scientists/officials) and the applicant notifying sanction letter is generated. Applicant then can download sanction letter. The emails will be sent to official ICAR emails only.
9. Applicant after completing his/her foreign deputation visits will have to upload deputation report duly countersigned by Director of the Institute (in case of institute scientist/official); DDG/ADG (Independent) (in case of Director or subordinate Hq. scientist/official) , as the case may be, in FVMS module within 30 days of return to India.
10. System generates a report listing all proposals and their recommendation and approval status. This report is visible to all proposal processing officers only.
11. In case of any technical support/query related to the FVMS, a contact email id is to be provided on the home page of the FVMS.

**(A) Proposals to be approved at ICAR**

- a) Proposal from Scientists (**up to the rank of Principal Scientist**) of ICAR HQ/ Institutes, **only for participating in meeting, conference, workshop or for presenting papers/ delivering lectures**, shall be processed for approval of **DG, ICAR provided** no funding is incurred from DARE/ICAR.

**Processing at FVMS will be done in the following manner:**

- i. Proposals will be submitted to reporting officer.
- ii. Reporting officer will check and verify all details. After verification, the proposal, if found satisfactory, shall be routed through the Director of Institute (in case of institute scientists) to the concerned DDG while the proposals from the HQ scientists shall be routed through DDG/ADG (Independent) concerned.
- iii. The concerned DDG/ ADG (Independent), after ensuring that no funding is proposed to be incurred in DARE/ICAR will forward the proposal to the respective Cadre Controlling Authority (**CCA**) [JS/Director (Personal/ Administration/ Technical Services)], as the case may be, for further examination by them.
- iv. Respective CCA will get the proposal examined in their division on the aspects as elaborated in **Annexure A**.
- v. The **CCA** shall also seek Vigilance Clearance of the Applicant from the vigilance division and shall provide its No Objection to the proposal.
- vi. The **CCA** after examination of the proposal will send the same back to the concerned DDG/ADG(Independent), as the case may be, for further processing and approval of DG,ICAR.
- vii. After proposal is approved by DG, ICAR, the concerned DDG/ADG(Independent), as the case may be, will get the approval conveyed to the applicant.
- viii. The system will maintain a record of these proposals for the information of Council.

- b) Proposals from Institute scientists (including Director of Institute) under approved projects which already have a provision of international visits and do not have any financial implication on DARE/ICAR, shall be approved by the concerned director of the institute (for subordinate scientists)/ DDG concerned (in case of Director of the institute)

**Processing at FVMS will be done in the following manner:**

- i. Proposals will be sent to reporting officer.
- ii. Reporting officer will check and verify all details. After verification, the proposal if found satisfactory, will be forwarded to Director of Institute.
- iii. In case of the subordinate scientist, the Director of the institute, after ensuring that no funding is proposed to be incurred in DARE/ICAR, will forward the proposal to the respective Cadre Controlling Authority (**CCA**) [JS/Director (Personal/ Administration/ Technical Services)], as the case may be, for further examination