

# Access to Scientific Instrumentation

## Program Policy



Research and Innovation Division

# Higher Education Commission

# Islamabad

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## **ACCESS TO SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTATION PROGRAM**

### **A. Introduction: -**

The lack of access to high-tech research equipment in Pakistani universities is a significant barrier to scientific progress. Due to the high costs of acquiring and maintaining modern equipment, the Higher Education Commission has launched an innovative program to share scientific instrumentation facilities. This initiative aims to provide the scientific community with access to advanced equipment while also offering a funding source for institutions that make their instruments available.

The **objectives** of this program are:

- i. Provide spectroscopic, analytical, chromatographic and other services to researchers working in different public sector universities on cost plus basis, which will be paid by the Higher Education Commission.
- ii. Through this program the institutions with instrumentation facilities will get financial resources to optimally utilize their instruments.
- iii. The PhD scholars in Pakistani HEIs will have access to available facilities within the country, which will promote research collaboration and save foreign exchange, which is otherwise, required.

### **B. Eligibility Criteria: -**

The facility is available only to enrolled PhD students from HEC recognized Public Sector Local Universities whose Synopsis has been approved by competent forum of university (Advance Studies & Research Board/Directorate of Research/Ethical Review Board etc.) and admitted as per HEC admission criteria with terms and conditions laid down in section C of this policy.

### **C. Terms and Conditions: -**

1. Students can apply for such lab tests, for which they do not have analytical facility at their own university.
2. Tests could only be performed from labs of public sector universities/public sector R&D organizations.
3. If the test equipment is available in the institute and the applicant is not using that facility, he/she must provide detailed justification for using the facility at other institute/test facility.

4. The applicant must declare that he/she has not been funded for the desired tests from any other funding agency.
5. The only well-justified proposals duly signed/endorsed by the supervisor are eligible under ASIP funding.
6. The supervisor must ensure that the research synopsis/proposal is approved by the competent forum of university, and the student must report results of his/her research samples' analysis, in the research work.
7. The supervisor can recommend maximum four ASIP applications in one fiscal year. A record will be maintained to track supervisor endorsements and the financial support granted to each applicant.
8. The Supervisor should be approved supervisor as per university policy and a full-time faculty member of the university.
9. The research support grant for sample analysis will not be granted to students whose institution is part of the ASIP Panel Services.
10. Institutions that are already part of the ASIP panel services must not charge fees from the students of their own university, campus, constituent college, centers, institutes and departments for test sampling/analysis.
11. Separate application(s) along with justification must be filed if tests are to be performed from more than one lab.
12. Scholars/Students involved in sample analysis must visit lab facilities at the time of sample analysis instead of only sending samples for analysis.
13. The applicant must be applying at least twelve weeks prior to sample analysis.
14. The maximum funding available for sample analysis for each applicant is Rs. 200,000/year (i.e. from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> June). While multiple applications may be submitted, but the total amount must not exceed the limit of Rs 200,000/year of three disbursements over the course of their program to support the completion of their research.
15. The applicants need to indicate at least three preferable test facilities for sample analysis, and the final decision will be made by the committee, keeping in mind multiple factors, including (but not limited to) the cost involved/available budget, etc.
16. Paid service providers, including lab technicians, statisticians, researchers, and

students from service-providing institutes, should not claim authorship for services rendered to ASIP research support grant awardees.

17. The cost will be paid to the service providers upon completion of analysis and upon the satisfactory report from the applicant.

#### **D. Evaluation Criteria:-**

1. Review of research synopsis by the committee to check its alignment with HEC funding objectives.
2. Explicit differentiation in the synopsis of tasks performed by the student and external labs.
3. Check synopsis for outlined learning objectives tied to experimental techniques.
4. Evaluate methodology section of the synopsis for detailed student involvement (if possible).
5. Check synopsis for outlined learning objectives tied to experimental techniques.
6. To assess whether the students' parent university has the necessary test equipment facility available or not.
7. To verify if students have outlined in the synopsis that 70% of research work will be done at their own university.
8. To assess the need for the requested test, ensuring the number of samples is justified according to the degree requirements.
9. To assess the justification provided for not using the equipment available at their own university.

#### **E. How to Apply: -**

To apply for the facility, the applicant needs to follow the steps given below:

1. The applicant needs to fill out the APPLICATION FORM for the Access to Scientific Instrumentation Program by providing all required information including supervisor details, research details, sample details, and three preferred sample analysis facilities.
2. The applicant must apply at least 12 weeks prior to the sample analysis.
3. Those seeking to use external facilities for testing from different cities must provide clear justification for not using the equipment available at their own university.
4. The applicant must attach one page summary/description of a research proposal with the application form. The summary must reflect the total number of samples to be analyzed during the whole research work.

5. Endorsement by research supervisor and the service provider must be obtained in the appropriate section of the prescribed application form.
6. The applications will be evaluated and decided by the ASIP Evaluation and Management Committee and the final decision will be made by keeping in mind multiple factors, including (but not limited to) the cost involved/available budget, etc.
7. The decision on the application may be delayed if additional information is required for clarification.
8. For all the approved cases, HEC will issue an award letter to the applicants.
9. Upon receipt of an award letter, the applicant may send samples to the service providers for analysis.
10. The service provider will analyze the sample and submit the claim to HEC.
11. HEC will reimburse the sample analysis cost to the service provider upon receipt of bills.

**F. Supporting Documents Required: -**

1. One page summary of the research proposal, including the description of analysis required from other institutions.
2. Copy of approval of Research synopsis/Proposal
3. Consent of service provider showing rates.
4. Brief profile of Research Supervisor

**G. Procedure to Approve Applications: -**

1. All the applications received at HEC will be evaluated and approved by ASIP Evaluation and Management committee comprising of professionals in relevant disciplines.
2. The Executive Director, HEC will sanction the approval of cost.
3. Executive Director (HEC) will appoint the members of the committee for a period of two years.
4. The award letter will be issued along with the sanctioned amount to the successful applicants.
5. No approval/sanction by the Executive Director, HEC will be required at the time of reimbursement, as long as the amount is within the already approved budget.

6. The Committee members will be granted an amount of Rs 10,000/- per meeting for their services rendered.
7. The terms of reference (TOR) of the committee will include:
  - i. Approve/disapprove cases based on the criteria outlined in Section D (Evaluation criteria) of this policy.
  - ii. Recommend the budget of the approved cases for the approval of Executive Director, HEC.
  - iii. Recommend the maximum budgetary limits of the program for the approval of the Executive Director, HEC.
  - iv. Reassess the review petitions/grievance submitted by applicants on ASIP matters.
  - v. Seek further clarification/information from the applicant if so required.
  - vi. Review and amend policy and procedures of ASIP to ensure the smooth conduct of the ASIP program.

#### **H. Reimbursement of Expenditures: -**

1. Upon approval of the application, HEC will issue a letter giving its consent to fund the cost of sample analysis. The letter will indicate the approved amount. The amount must be spent only for specified sample analysis.
2. For approved cases, the sanctioned amount will be reimbursed to the service provider after sample analysis to the satisfaction of the service seeker.
3. The reimbursement claim should be filed, preferably within two months after the sample analysis.



**HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION  
H-9, ISLAMABAD (PAKISTAN)**

**Payment Form for Access to Scientific Instrumentation Program**

**APPLICANT DETAILS :**

<b>Name of Applicant</b>	
<b>Name of Supervisor</b>	
<b>Department</b>	
<b>University/DAI</b>	
<b>Contact Details</b>	Cell: _____ Email: _____
<b>Name of Service Provider</b>	
<b>HEC Award Letter No. &amp; Date</b> <i>(attach a copy of HEC Award Letter for Ready Reference)</i>	

**EXPENDITURE DETAILS :**

<b>SN</b>	<b>Name of Test</b>	<b>No. of Samples</b>	<b>Rate per Sample (Rs.)</b>	<b>Total Amount (Rs.)</b>
<b>Total</b>				

Certified that the above expenditures have been incurred by the applicant to analyze the samples from the above mentioned service provider.

**SIGNATURE OF THE APPLICANT**

**SIGNATURE OF THE SUPERVISOR**  
(Name and Official Stamp)

**COUNTERSIGNED BY DIRECTOR ORIC/DEAN\***  
(Name and Official Stamp)  
(\*in case where ORIC does not exist)

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach the following with this form:

- Original Invoice (by Service Provider)
- Result Acceptance Voucher
- Copy of HEC Award Letter





