

Report

on

Policy for Deciding Travel Application by Students

November 21, 2010

1 Introduction

This is with respect to the office order no. D.O./16142 dated 30 September, 2010 issued by the director. A discussion was initiated over email and the opinion of the out-of-Kolkata committee members on policy formulation was solicited. The Kolkata-based members of the committee met on 9 November, 2010. Based on the opinions received over email and discussion during the physical meeting a draft was formulated and circulated to the members by email. Based on feedback received on the draft, the following policy has been formulated.

2 Purpose of Travel

Conference visit. The nature of visits to conferences, workshops, meetings, special schools and other scientific gatherings can be of the following two types.

Type-I. To present a paper. The conditions are the following.

1. The conference must have formally published proceedings.
2. Acceptance of a paper for presentation must be based on usual peer-review procedures.

Type-II. To deliver an invited talk.

Type-III. To listen to talks.

Visiting other institutes. Travels of this kind will be called **Type-IV** travel and is primarily meant for PhD students.

3 Eligibility

1. Students of all degree courses under the dean would be eligible for travel support.
2. For PhD students, the applicant should have qualified the ISI-JRF written test and interview. The period of the proposed visit should be within four-and-half years of qualifying the ISI-JRF written test and interview.
3. For students of other courses (i.e., students who are not pursuing their PhD studies), the average marks in the last semester prior to the date of application must have been at least 75%. Note that this cut-off is used by the institute to determine students who have passed with distinction.

4 Amount of Support

For **Type-I** and **Type-II** kinds of travel, normally full support would be provided. If, however, the applicant receives support from the conference organisers or some other sources, then this amount will be deducted from the amount of support to be provided. Full support would include the following items.

1. Domestic travel.
 - (a) Registration fees.
 - (b) Round-trip travel cost as per the institute norms.
 - (c) Actual costs of accommodation and sustenance of upto Rs. 2000 per day.
2. International travel.
 - (a) Registration fees.
 - (b) Visa fees and silver class medical insurance fees.
 - (c) Round-trip travel cost as per the institute norms.
 - (d) Actual costs of accommodation and sustenance of upto U.S. Dollar 125.00 per day.

For **Type-III** and **Type-IV** kinds of travel the following would be covered.

1. Domestic travel.
 - (a) Round-trip travel cost as per the institute norms.
2. International travel.
 - (a) Visa fees and silver class medical insurance fees.
 - (b) Round-trip travel cost as per the institute norms.

It is expected that local support for accommodation and sustenance will be provided by the host institute or the organisers of schools and/or workshops. The applicant may also arrange for local support from other sources.

5 Mode of Operation

1. The application for travel support should be made to the Dean of Studies on a prescribed form (attached) with necessary supporting documents.
2. For PhD students, the application should be forwarded by the supervisor (if one has been assigned) and the chairman of the concerned RFAC. The supervisor and/or the RFAC-chairman should clearly mention the benefit to the student from the proposed travel.
3. For students of other courses, the application should be forwarded by a relevant faculty member. This faculty member should clearly mention the benefit to the student from the proposed travel.
4. Based on the above policy, the Dean may take one of the following actions.
 - (a) For domestic travel, the Dean may approve the application.
 - (b) For international travel, the Dean may forward the application to the director for necessary approval.
 - (c) At his or her discretion, the Dean may consult a committee constituted by the director for considering travel applications made by students.
 - (d) The Dean may reject the application.
5. All approved travels should comply with other administrative norms and procedures of the institute.

6 Other Points Raised by the Committee Members

1. Eligibility should be restricted only to PhD students. It has been argued that the main purpose of such travel is to be able to enrich oneself by interacting with experts. A non-PhD student would typically not have enough maturity for this.
2. Students who apply for travel support should cover some of the expenses from his/her contingency grant. It has been argued that this would show seriousness on part of the applicant.
3. Non peer-reviewed conferences should also be included. If such conferences are indeed included, then the applicant may be asked to cover part of the expenses from the contingency grant as mentioned above.
4. There should be a cap on the number of travels permitted to each student.
5. There should be a cap on the number of **Type-III** travels permitted to each student.
6. The dean should automatically consult the committee for each and every application.

Application Form for Travel Support

1. Name of the applicant:
2. Date of application:
3. Name of the degree course in which the student is enrolled:
If you are a PhD student, then mention the year in which you qualified the ISI-JRF test and interview:
4. Purpose of travel: indicate type by ticking all applicable and provide details.
(Type-I/Type-II/Type-III/Type-IV)

5. Dates of travel:

6. Detailed estimate of the cost of travel:

7. Signature of the student with date:

8. Justification of the benefit to the student from the travel.

For PhD students:

Comments of the supervisor (if one has been assigned).

Comments of RFAC-chairman:

For non-PhD students:

Comments by a relevant faculty member.

9. Comments by the Dean of Studies.

10. Signature of the approving authority.

11. List of supporting documents.