

Research and Development Grant (RDG) Overview

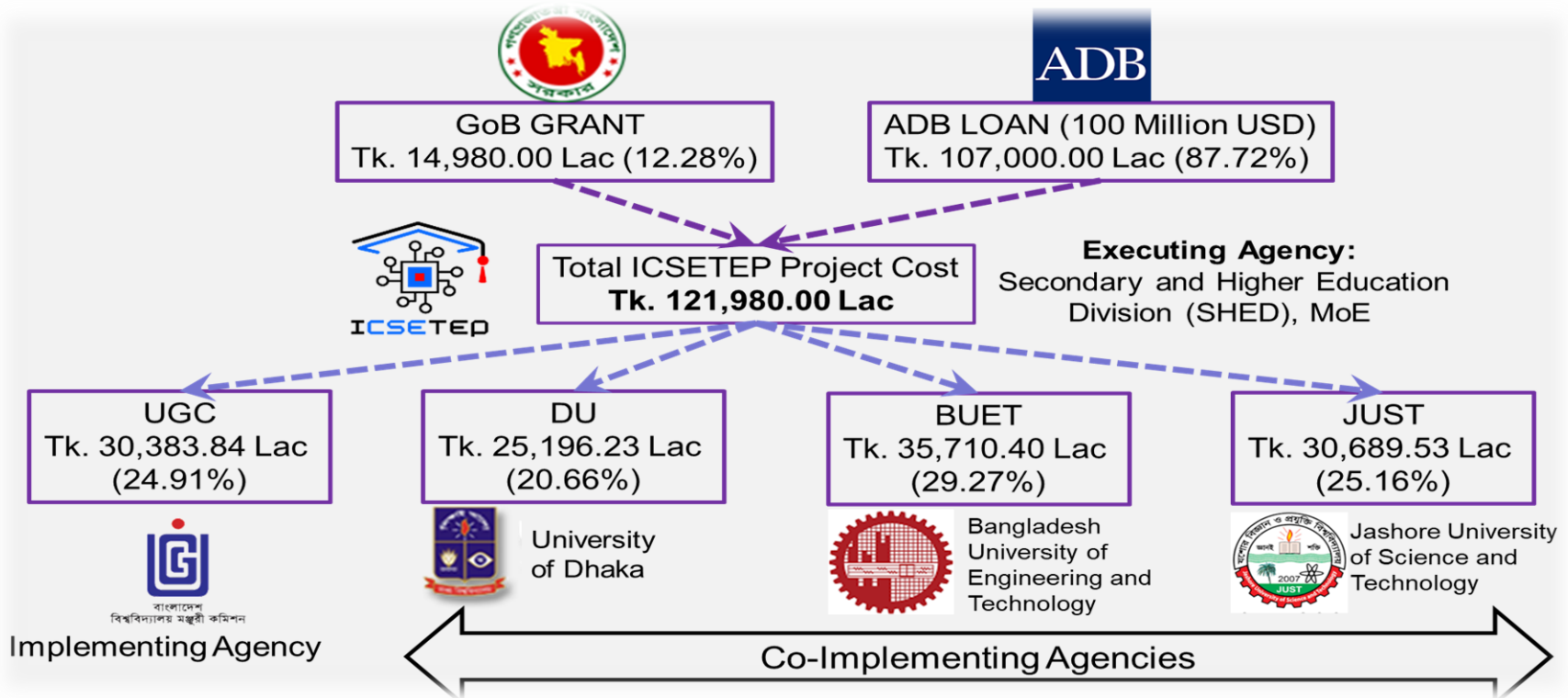
*IMPROVING COMPUTER AND SOFTWARE
ENGINEERING TERTIARY EDUCATION PROJECT
(ICSETEP)*



Overview of ICSETEP

Implementing Agency	University Grants Commission (UGC), Bangladesh
Co-implementing Agencies (Project Implementing Units)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ University of Dhaka (DU) ❖ Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) ❖ Jashore University of Science and Technology (JUST)
Estimated Cost	Tk. 121,980.00 lakh (GoB + ADB loan)
Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ GoB: Tk. 14,980.00 lakh (12.28%) ❖ ADB Loan: Tk. 107,000.00 lakh (87.72%) ≈ USD 100 million
Duration	01 March 2023 – 30 June 2028
Approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ ECNEC approval: 02.05.2023 ❖ Administrative order: 11.06.2023 ❖ Project Director joined: 19.11.2023

Estimated Cost for PMU and 3 PIUs



Project Management Unit (PMU)

3 Project Implementing Units (PIUs) : DU, BUET, JUST

Objectives of ICSETEP

- ❖ Increase the number of **qualified CSE/IT graduates**
- ❖ Enhance **female student enrollment** and retention via stipends/scholarships
- ❖ Ensure quality and international **accreditation of CSE/IT programs.**
- ❖ Provide domestic and international **internships**
- ❖ Strengthen **research & development capacity** and academia-industry collaboration
- ❖ Foster entrepreneurship and support **start-ups**
- ❖ Improve student **career services** for employment.

Activities of ICSETEP

PMU under UGC

- ❖ Consultancy support for the total project (3 PIUs)
- ❖ Competitive **Research & Development Grant (RDG)**
- ❖ Domestic and International **Internship** other than PIUs
- ❖ **Curriculum Design** and Update
- ❖ International **Accreditation Support**
- ❖ **Visiting Professor** from Home and Abroad
- ❖ Online **Open Courseware** Support
- ❖ Workshops, Seminars, Conferences and International Trainings
- ❖ Support for **female employment** promotion in the IT industry
- ❖ Ensure facilities for **female students, faculty** and **disadvantaged groups** in modern learning, research and start-ups
- ❖ Conduct awareness-raising activities on **gender equity** and a socially inclusive learning environment in PIUs

Activities of ICSETEP

PIUs (DU, BUET, JUST):

- ❖ Build new green **academic buildings** with entrepreneurship, startup and incubation facilities at DU (13-story), BUET (17-story), and JUST (10-story)
- ❖ Establish modern, state-of-the-art **labs** and develop startup and **incubation support services**
- ❖ Upgrade **curriculum** for industry-relevant education and research and obtain program **accreditation** aligned with international standards
- ❖ Increase **undergraduate enrollment** in CSE/IT
- ❖ Provide stipend, **scholarship** and fellowship for undergraduate and postgraduate students
- ❖ Provide domestic & international **internship** and engage visiting professor
- ❖ Workshops, Seminars, Conferences and Trainings

Key Outputs of ICSETEP

- ❖ Output 1: Establishment of modern learning, research and startup facilities.
- ❖ Output 2: Enhancement of the quality and industry relevance of CSE/IT programs.
- ❖ Output 3: **Strengthening R&D** and technology entrepreneurship
- ❖ Output 4: Strengthening project management capacity

Overview of RDG

Total Budget: Tk. 9,960.44 lakh

Focus Areas:

1. Academy–Industry Collaboration (50%)
2. Interdisciplinary R&D (25%)
3. Cutting-edge CSE/IT Research (15%)
4. IT Solutions for Disability Issues (10%)

Grant Size: Tk. 25.0–250.0 lakh

Duration: 2 years (extendable by 12 months)

Eligibility for Receiving RDG

Proposal Submitting Entities

The following entities of eligible universities may submit project proposals:

- ❖ Departments
- ❖ Institutes
- ❖ Centers
- ❖ Combination of two or more of the above entities

Entity Eligibility

- ❑ To be an eligible recipient of RDG allocation, the proposal submitting institutes/departments should fulfil the following criteria:
 - Offer undergraduate/post-graduate degree in Computer Science and Engineering (CSE)/ ICT or related discipline
 - Has successfully graduated at least one batch of undergraduate/ postgraduate students
 - Have qualified faculty members to lead the project as PI

Entity Eligibility

- Possess **adequate infrastructures and facilities** for implementing the proposed research proposal within the university
- **Private Universities** should have a **permanent certificate from SHED**, Ministry of Education, at the time of SPP submission.
- **The industry** with which the sub-project desires to conduct **collaborative research should have registration** with recognized Government bodies

Interpretation of CSE/ICT Related Discipline

For Undergraduate level:

A CSE/ICT Related Discipline must offer **at least 80% of the courses/components** from any of the categories below:

Category 1:

As mentioned in the **UGC's "Guideline for preparing standard curriculum of B. Sc. in Computer Science and Engineering"**

Programming: Introduction to Computing, Structured Programming, Object-Oriented Programming, Web Programming, and Mobile Programming. etc.

Hardware Systems: Digital Logic Design, Computer Architecture, and Microprocessors & Microcontrollers, etc.

Logics and Algorithms: Discrete Mathematics, Data Structures, Algorithms

Systems: Computer and Cyber Security, Database, Operating System, Networking, etc.

Software Systems and Engineering: Software Engineering, Information System and Design, etc.

Technical Electives: Theory; Communications; Systems; Data Science; Software Engineering; Hardware; ICT

Interpretation of CSE/ICT Related Discipline

For Undergraduate level:

Category 2:

As mentioned in the [BAETE Accreditation Manual v2.1](#) under "[Criteria for Computer Science and Engineering or Similar Program](#)"-

Discrete mathematics, Computer science, and Engineering sciences for the analysis and design of complex electrical and electronic devices, software, and systems containing hardware and software components, Concepts of programming languages, Data structures, Algorithms and complexity, Software design, Digital logic, Computer organization and architecture, Operating systems and Networking systems, Tools for the specification, design, implementation, testing and maintenance of software systems, Exposure to a variety of programming languages and systems, including proficiency in at least one higher-level language

Interpretation of CSE/ICT Related Discipline

For Post-graduate level:

A CSE/ICT Related Discipline must offer at least 80% of courses/components from at least three domains from the following list:

Algorithms; Software Engineering; Data Science; Intelligent Computing; Security and Privacy; Computer Networks and Systems; High Performance and Distributed Computing; Hardware and Embedded Systems.

According to the Postgraduate Curriculum of DU (IIT, CSE) and BUET (CSE, IICT)

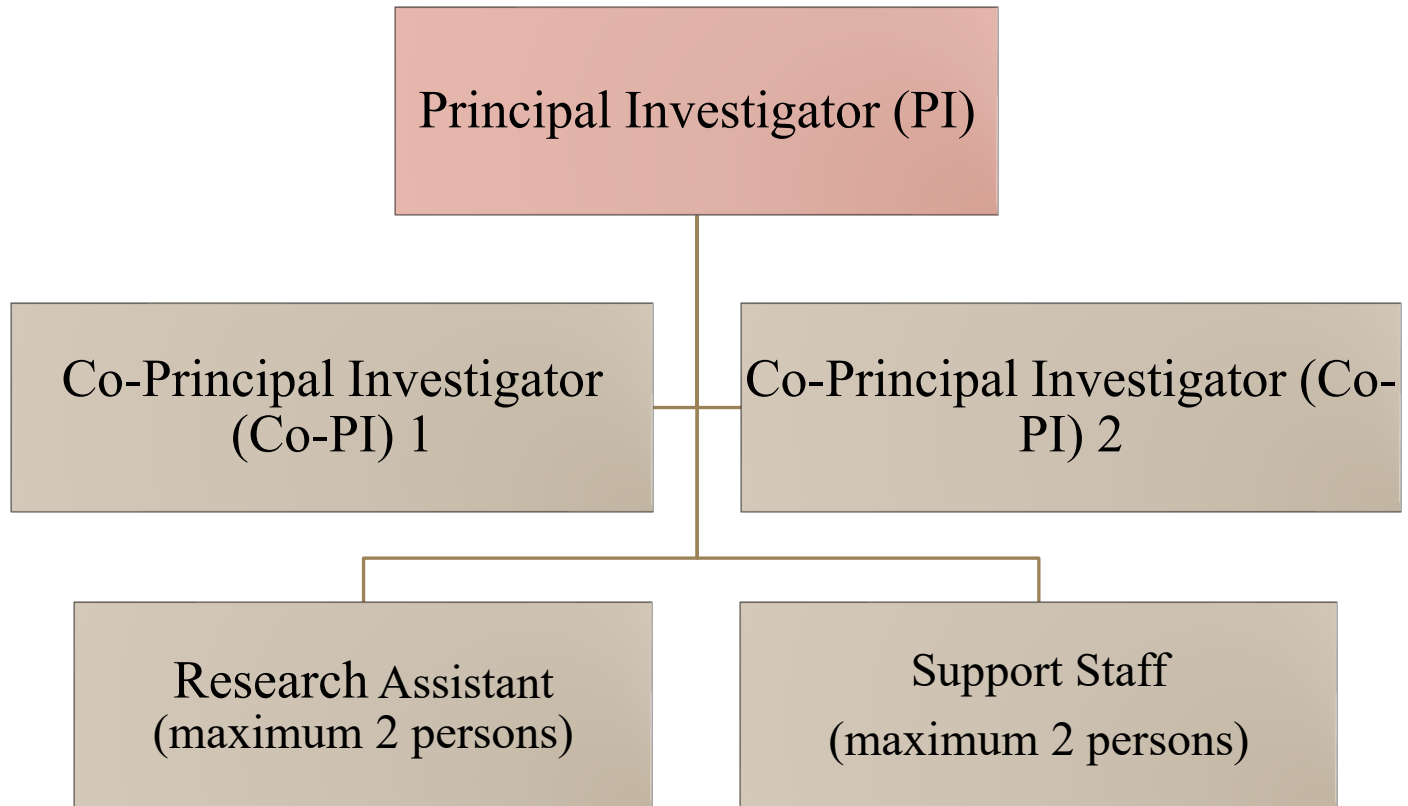
Entity Eligibility

The industry with which the sub-project desires to conduct collaborative research should be registered with recognized government bodies.

- ❖ Legal certificate of the company/industry (Trade License, RJSC registration certificate, Certificate of Incorporation, etc)
- ❖ Turnover of the industry/company for the last three financial years
- ❖ Audited financial report for the last three financial years
- ❖ Up-to-date Income Tax and VAT Payment Certificate
- ❖ Company structure (Organogram) and brochure

PI and Co-PI Eligibility

Sub-Project Management Team



Organogram of the Sub-Project Management Team

PI and Co-PI Eligibility

- Only regular faculty members are eligible to be PI and Co-PI from the proposal submitting entity.
- PI will be a professor, associate Professor, or Assistant Professor, having a PhD degree.

ICSETEP strongly encourages women (either or both as PI and Co-PI) to apply and welcomes mixed-group formation

beginning or implementation of the sub-project.

There will be **one/two Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)** who are involved actively in the sub-project implementation.

For joint research proposals with other departments, institutes, or universities along with the Proposal Submitting Entity, **one Co-PI must be included from the collaborating department, institute, or university.**

This Co-PI will be considered as the **second Co-PI of the SPMT.**

Proposal plan

- ❑ Call for RDG SPP from ICSETEP, UGC
 - ❖ Monday, [September 1, 2025](#)
- ❑ Submission of complete SPP to URDGS in 5 weeks
 - ❖ Monday, [October 6, 2025](#)
- ❑ Submission of SPPs to ICSETEP by URDGS/entity with VC's endorsement
 - ❖ Monday, [October 13, 2025](#)
- ❑ Final Selection and Publication of Award by RDGB
 - ❖ Thursday, [December 11, 2025](#)

Committee Structure in RDG

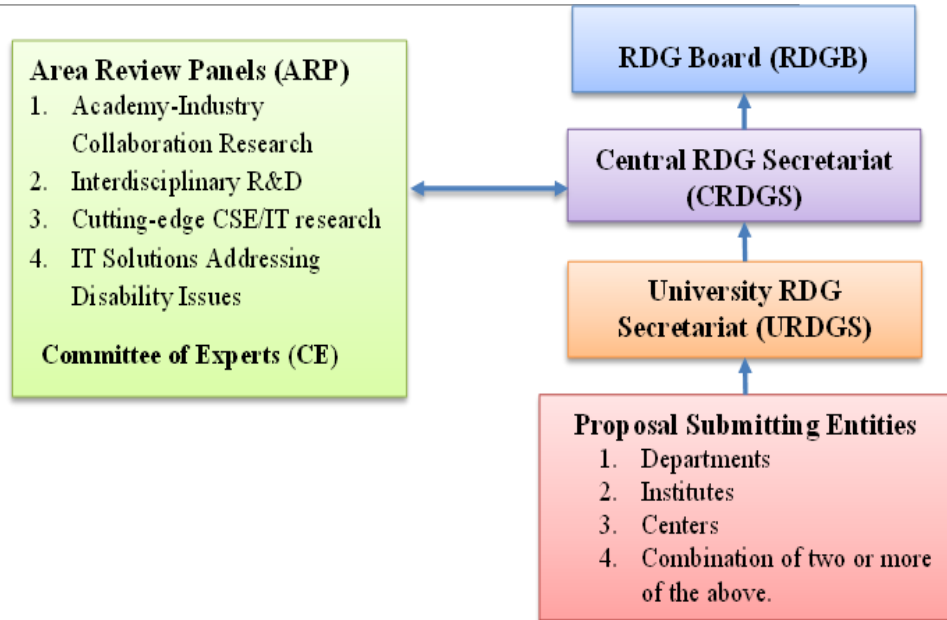
❖ **RDG Board (RDGB)** – Final selection and policy oversight, Approve results, decide awards

❖ **Committee of Experts (CE)** – Recommend peer reviewers, advise RDGB, maintain evaluation quality

❖ **Central RDG Secretariat (CRDGS)** – Call for proposals, completeness check, reviewer assignment, compile scores, i.e overall management, coordination, evaluation, logistics

❖ **University RDG Secretariat (URDGS)** – University-level proposal handling, PI support, ensure compliance, liaise with PMU

❖ **Area Review Panels (ARPs)** – Peer review in 4 focus areas, evaluate proposals, avoid conflicts of interest



Proposal Receive and Evaluation Procedure

- ❖ The call for proposals, the guidelines for proposal submission, the proposal receiving, the criteria and process of evaluation, and the results of the evaluation should be **consistently transparent**.
- ❖ Any attempt to establish **contact and/or communicate with the ARP members and CE** by an entity and/or its PI during evaluation shall automatically **result in cancellation** of the SPPs from the competition.
- ❖ All eligible proposal submitting entities may submit SPPs in the appropriate **prescribed format**
- ❖ After receiving the SPPs from the universities, the ICSETEP shall put code numbers on the SPPs; the code number shall be called as **Proposal Identification Number (PIN)**.
- ❖ An academic will be allowed to become the **PI** for only one SPP. If an academic is endorsed as PI by the submitting entity in **more than one SPP**, all SPPs will be **rejected**.

Proposal Receive and Evaluation Procedure

- ❖ CRDGS shall submit the [scrutiny database of SPP](#) along with the [eligibility checklist and SPPs](#) to RDGB. Upon review of the materials, the RDGB may, at this stage, [reject a sub-project](#) on the grounds of critical lapses specified in the checklist or for other cogent reasons.
- ❖ Each SPP will be evaluated by [two reviewers](#) from ARPs, and if the marks awarded by them [differ by more than 20%](#), it will be evaluated by a third reviewer.
- ❖ The ARP members shall evaluate the SPPs in a [closed-door evaluation](#) session (may be at UGC) [supervised by RDGB](#). The ICSETEP shall provide secretarial support and make the arrangements for the evaluation under the guidance of RDGB.
- ❖ [After the final selection](#), the [budget, procurement plan and the financial plan](#) of the ASPs will be scrutinized by the ICSETEP to identify inconsistencies, errors and deficiencies

Area Review Panels (ARPs)

- ❖ The CRDGS will prepare a **list of a pool of peer reviewers** consisting of a broad spectrum of academics from universities, research organizations and individuals for the evaluation and selection of RDG sub-project proposals.
- ❖ From the pool, **four Area Review Panels (ARPs)** will be organized, covering four Areas of research under the RDG fund.
 - Academy-Industry Collaboration
 - Interdisciplinary R&D
 - Cutting Edge CSE/IT Research
 - IT Solutions Addressing Disability Issues

Area Review Panels (ARPs)

- ❖ The **PIs/Co-PIs** who have submitted SPPs shall **not be eligible** for becoming members of the **review panel**.
- ❖ ARPs will be **approved by RDGB**.
- ❖ Each SPP will be evaluated by two reviewers who shall belong to the area/discipline of the proposal to be evaluated.
- ❖ The **evaluation** will be done by awarding marks out of a total of **100**

Evaluation Criteria of Sub-Projects

Area Review Panels (ARPs) shall evaluate SPPs according to the following criteria



Academy-Industry



Interdisciplinary



Cutting Edge



Solutions to
disability issues

Final Selection of Sub-Project for Award

- ❖ RDGB will take one week to complete the final selection of proposals.
- ❖ The sub-projects will be awarded on a merit basis. However, the ceiling of the total awarded grant for a particular university (combining grant amounts of individual sub-projects) will be 20% of the ICSETEP research grant budget.
- ❖ As per the targets mentioned in DPP, Academy-Industry Collaboration, Interdisciplinary R&D, and IT Solutions Addressing Disability Issues will be awarded at least 10, 6, and 4 sub-projects, respectively.

Proposals Writing Template

- ❖ Sub-project proposals for RDG funding should be prepared following the **prescribed format** given in Annexure 1(a) to 1(d) of this RDGOM

Annexure 1(a) - Academy-Industry Collaboration

Annexure 1(b) - Interdisciplinary R&D

Annexure 1(c) - Cutting Edge CSE/IT Research

Annexure 1(d) - IT Solutions Addressing Disability Issues

Major Area Coverage by RDG

Academy-Industry Collaboration: Address industry problems or develop new products or services through CSE/IT technologies; **industry partners** participate in such collaboration research. This collaboration includes both industry and international universities. The research proposals are encouraged to adopt **ICT solutions for different sectors**, such as food processing, agriculture, fisheries, livestock, textiles and ready-made garments, pharmaceuticals, leather and footwear, automobile and transport, and shipbuilding.

Interdisciplinary R&D: **IT solutions** combined with **other engineering and non-engineering academic disciplines** such as medicine, education, public services, infrastructure development and maintenance, to develop new products or services.

Major Area Coverage by RDG

Cutting Edge CSE/IT Research: Research in newly emerging fields, such as artificial intelligence, internet of things, big data analytics, cyber security, bioinformatics, computer vision, machine learning, robotics, etc.

IT Solutions Addressing Disability Issues: Develop systems addressing different disability issues (e.g., autism, blindness, deafness, dementia, and disability due to injury) in collaboration with civil society and/or organizations (governmental or non-governmental) working for disabled people.

Financial and Procurement Management

Indicative Eligible Expenditure

❖ Training, Workshop and Seminar

- ❖ Members of SPMT and staff of RDG sub-project may participate in the training courses related to project implementation, such as project management, procurement, financial management, research methodology
- ❖ Course fee, TA/DA for the training will be provided, RDG allocation according to the approved rules
- ❖ Expenditure to organize workshops/seminars for the dissemination of R&D findings at university premises.
- ❖ Expenditure on disseminating research findings, publishing in a journal and/or presenting at a conference, seminar

Indicative Eligible Expenditure

❖ Post-graduate Research Fellowship

- ❖ Financial support will be provided to full-time Master's and full-time PhD students
- ❖ Master's students will be Taka 30,000/- per month for a maximum of 1.5 years
- ❖ Financial support as a fellowship to PhD students will be Taka 50,000/- per month for a maximum of 3 years
- ❖ Number of research students to be recruited will be limited to six (altogether) during the total duration of a sub-project, but the number of awardees under PhD will not be more than three.
- ❖ Post-graduate research students will be selected by the institution according to the existing selection procedure of the university. The main supervisor of a post-graduate research student will be PI or Co-PI(s), and the joint-supervisor (s) or co-supervisor(s) may be from other institutes/universities of home and abroad.
- ❖ Allowances for research stay in a foreign university/institute for members of the sub-project management team and PhD students;
- ❖ PhD supervisor and student will get an economic return airfare and monthly allowances

Indicative Eligible Expenditure

❖ Research Collaboration Foreign Visit

- ❖ Research collaboration with foreign universities, institutes, research organizations, industries, professional bodies and associations may be allowed for 3 years for PhD and 1.5 years for Master students.
- ❖ Collaboration visit of regular faculty staff to foreign universities and research institutions as part of RDG sub-project proposal/activities may be allowed;
- ❖ Total expenses for a visit abroad should not exceed Tk. 20.0 lakh or 10% of the sub-project allocation, whichever is lower.
- ❖ One academic of a university shall be entitled to only one visit under all sub-projects except PIs, who will be entitled to a maximum of two visits;

Indicative Eligible Expenditure

❖ Incentives for Members of the Sub-Project Management Team (SPMT)

- ❖ The PI and Co-PIs of a sub-project will be eligible for receiving financial incentives @ four months' and two months' basic salary, respectively, per year.
- ❖ SPMT of private universities will receive financial incentives equivalent to the salary of a similar faculty position in public universities.
- ❖ The total ceiling for incentives for the total sub-project period must not exceed Taka 20.0 lakh or 10% of the total sub-project cost, whichever is lower.
- ❖ The incentive will be paid upon submission of a half-yearly research progress report by the PI to PMU, justifying the contribution of individual members to the SPMT.

Indicative Eligible Expenditure

- ❖ PI may appoint a **Research Assistant (maximum two)** as per project requirements. The qualification of the Research Assistant shall be a **graduate from the relevant discipline with relevant experience**. Remuneration of the Research Assistant will be a **consolidated pay of Grade 9**.
- ❖ PI may appoint **provisional staff (not more than two)** for services as required for the implementation of the sub-project. **One Accountant cum Computer Operator** or **Accountant cum Office Secretary** in consolidated pay of **Grade 13** and one **Office Shohayok in consolidated pay of Grade 20**.

Indicative Eligible Expenditure

- ❖ The PI may appoint support staff(s) from the regular staff of the university by giving them additional responsibilities as admissible under university rules, with a financial benefit up to **Taka 8,000/- per month per person**.
- ❖ Provision of **Hiring Expert Services**: Visiting professors/scholars/consultants/ experts will be **hired based on a deliverable or lump sum basis, with the prior permission of PD, ICSETEP**. In consultation with the PI, PD will decide the ToR for the experts and remuneration of visiting university professor/consultant/expert, and **the expert will be hired following ADB guidelines**.
- ❖ The **Vice Chancellor** will be the **approval authority** to recruit the sub-project manpower.

Indicative Eligible Expenditure

❖ Procurement of Goods and Services

Admissible Procurement of Goods

- Scientific instruments, tools, devices and equipment for research;
- Consumables needed for research (e.g., specimens, chemicals, coolants);
- ICT equipment, special software and accessories for sub-project;
- Equipment and furniture for sub-project office;
- Collection of books, journals, etc.;
- Publications of research findings and patent registration;
- Printing and stationery.

Indicative Eligible Expenditure

Admissible Procurement of Services

- Remuneration/fee of the visiting professors /scholars /consultants/experts;
- Remuneration of Research Associate and provisionally hired manpower;
- Repair/maintenance of sub-project laboratory and office equipment;
- Payments for intellectual properties, patents, use, etc.
- Payment for scientific analytical work;
- Payment for cloud support: Cloud computing resource/cloud server/cloud storage /data center support shall be taken from the university IT faculty or BdREN, UGC. In case of unavailability of these services, any standard cloud service provider may be used.

Non-Eligible Expenditure

- ❖ Salary and allowances for the regular academic and support staff of the university;
- ❖ Any establishment/recurring/revenue expenditures of the department/faculty/ institute/center/ university;
- ❖ Civil works like construction of new physical infrastructure, i.e., building, road, laboratory, workshop, classroom, auditorium, library, seminar hall, lecture theatre, room, physical facilities, etc.;
- ❖ Costs not related to RDG sub-project activities and not included in the sub-project work plan, financial and procurement plans and budget;
- ❖ Cost of vehicle purchase.

Budget

Summary of Estimated Budget

Economic Code	Description (Item of Expenditure)	Unit	Cost per Unit	Estimated Cost	% of Estimated Cost
A	Recurrent Expenditure				
	Personnel Cost				
	Honorarium				
	Administrative expenses				
	Repairs and maintenance				
	Workshop/Training/Consultancy				
	Stipend/Scholarship				
	Total Recurrent				
B	Capital Expenditure				
	ICT equipment				
	Computers and accessories				
	Electrical equipment				
	Laboratory equipment				
	Office equipment				
	Teaching and learning material				
	Furniture				
	Research and Development (Intellectual Property Product)				
	Total Capital				
C	Operational Costs/Contingencies (maximum 2% of total cost)				
Grants Total (A+B+ C)					39



Budget

Procurement of Goods and Services

Goods and services shall be procured by following [PPA 2006](#), [PPR 2008](#), and updated [ADB procurement guidelines \(ADB Procurement Policy 2017, Procurement Regulations for ADB Borrowers: Goods, Works, Non-consulting and Consulting Services 2017\)](#) and project administrative manual ([PAM](#)) where applicable. The procurement of **works is not allowed for the sub-projects in principle.**

Procurement Plan

Procurement Plan to be prepared for **all Procurement packages** of Goods, Works, and Services **except Direct Cash Purchase**.

Procurement through offline and online systems as applicable in OTM, LTM, RFQ, DPM, etc.

Direct Cash Purchase (PPR Rule 81)

Maximum BDT 25 Thousand each case, but 10 Lakh per year

Low value goods and emergency mandatory services: maintenance, transport, etc

No contract agreement, but through a voucher certified by a 3-member committee.

Request for Quotation (RFQ)

Development Budget (PPR Rule 69)

Goods and related services: Max BDT 5 lakh each case and annually BDT 30 Lakh

Works and physical services: Max BDT 10 lakh each case and annually BDT 60 Lakh

Consulting Services

Single Source Selection (PPR Rule 104(d)(2).:

Individual upto BDT 10 Lakh

Firm upto BDT 20 Lakh

... others

Short Term Consultancy Services (Individual): As per PAM

Not exceeding 33 working days per contract, and only be awarded a maximum of 3 engagements not to exceed an aggregate total of 66 working days within a 12-month period.

QCBS, FBS, LCS, ICS, SBCQ, DCS, CSOS

Sub-Project Procurement Plan: Procurement of Goods

Sl. No.	Package No.	Description of Procurement Package	Unit	Quantity	Procurement Method & Type (OTM/LTM/RFQ etc.& NCT/ICT)	Contract Approving Authority	Estimated cost in Lakh Taka	Advertisement date	Time for completion (date)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Sub-Project Procurement Plan: Procurement of Works

Sl. No.	Package No.	Description of Procurement Package	Unit	Quantity	Procurement Method & Type (OTM/LTM/RFQ etc.& NCT/ICT)	Contract Approving Authority	Estimated cost in Lakh Taka	Advertisement date	Time for completion (date)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Sub-Project Procurement Plan: Procurement of Services

Sl. No.	Package No.	Description of Procurement Package	Unit	Quantity	Procurement Method & Type (OTM/LTM /RFQ etc.& NCT/ICT)	Contract Approving Authority	Estimated cost in Lakh Taka	Advertisement date	Time for completion (date)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Procurement Management

Procurement is one of the major activities of any development project.

The Government of Bangladesh has made it mandatory for all institutions/organizations/agencies to follow [Public Procurement Act 2006](#) and [Public Procurement Rules 2008](#) for the purchase of all kinds of goods, works and services from within the country and from abroad to be made under both the revenue as well as development budgets.

However, in conformity with Rule 3(d) of PPR, for ADB funded ICSETEP, all procurement will follow the [ADB Procurement Policy](#) (2017, as amended from time to time) and Procurement Regulations for ADB Borrowers (2017, as amended from time to time).

Procurement Management

A **procurement plan** covering all major procurement packages for the **RDG sub-project will be prepared while submitting the SPP**. However, it will be verified by ICSETEP immediately after commencement of the sub-project.

The **Procurement Plan will be updated annually** to reflect the actual project implementation and adjustments thereof. The procurement officials and procurement specialists of ICSETEP will provide technical assistance to the PIs in rationalizing their respective procurement plans and implementation as well.

Procurement Management

All **procurement methods** for goods, small-scale works (**renovation and refurbishment**) and services will be specified in the **Annual Procurement Plan (APP)** and will proceed taking consent from PMU, ICSETEP.

PMU may centrally procure common items for sub-projects on requisition.

All procurements by sub-projects would need prior review from PMU.

Procurement Management

Procurement post-reviews will be done on a semi-annual basis following the procurement policy of GoB and/or ADB.

ICSETEP encourage sub-projects to use e-Government Procurement (e-GP) for ensuring transparency and accountability.

The honorarium of procurement committees shall follow ICSETEP/GoB rates.

Thanks