



प्रशान्त पिसे Prashant Pise



संयुक्त सचिव, विदेश मंत्रालय

JOINT SECRETARY

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

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Email

MOST IMMEDIATE

उप महानिदेशक

भारतीय सांस्कृतिक सम्बंध परिषद्

DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL, ICCR

15th March, 2021

From: ICCR, New Delhi
To: All Indian Missions abroad
Rpt: AS(IP)/AS(Africa)/AS(EA)/JS(AMS)/JS(North)/(C&WA)/
JS(ERS)/JS(EW)/JS(South)/JS(CE)/JS(PAI)/JS(Gulf)/JS(WANA)/JS(LAC)/JS(IOR)/JS(BM), MEA, New Delhi

HOM/HOP from Deputy Director General (Culture)

Subject:- Announcement of 100 ICCR Scholarships Slots globally under the "**ICCR Scholarship Scheme for Indian Culture (A1209) for pursuing study of Indian Culture such as dance, music, theatre, performing art, sculpture, Indian languages, Indian cuisine, etc.** for the academic year 2021-22

ICCR is pleased to announce **100 scholarship slots** under the **ICCR Scholarship Scheme for Indian Culture (A1209)** at Indian Universities/Institutes in the academic year 2021-22. This scholarship scheme was known until last academic year as "Scholarship scheme for Dance and Music". Due to its narrow scope limited to Indian dance and music and, more importantly, no provision for international airfare, the scheme was grossly under-utilised. ICCR has, therefore, decided to expand the scope of the scholarship scheme by renaming it as "**ICCR Scholarship Scheme for Indian Culture**" encompassing wider facets of Indian culture not just limited to dance and music but also to performing art, theatre, sculpture, Indian cuisine, etc. **The scholarship will also provide international airfare to students.** This would make the scholarship more attractive. All Missions are requested to promote the scholarship as widely as possible. In all, there are 100 slots available under this scholarship. The admission applications from interested students for academic year 2021-22 will be invited online through ICCR's **A2A Scholarship Portal** <http://a2ascholarships.iccr.gov.in>. The **A2A Scholarship Portal** will be operational from 15th March 2021 for foreign students to apply for admission. For the academic year 2021-22, a '**Timeline for the admission process**' has been set which is attached for reference. Mission is requested to adhere to the timeline.

2. In order to minimize delay at various stages, streamline and smoothen the entire online application process through **A2A Portal** by coordinating better with our Missions abroad, various Universities / Institutes, and our Regional Offices, the admission flow has been amended. The revised admission flow chart is attached. Highlights of revised admission process are as follows:-

- To ensure reputed institutes, University/Institutes with accreditation of NAAC (A and above) rating /NIRF (rank between 1 – 150) are listed on **A2A Scholarship Portal** for admission of foreign students through ICCR.
- According to new admission policy, applications will be directly sent by students to respective universities instead of processing at mission-level. This will automate the process and universities will be able to see the applications received directly from the students.
- A large number of Universities / Institutes (except ICAR and Ayush) are linked on **A2A Portal** for receiving applications directly from foreign students.

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- iv) Applicants will now have the option to apply to 5 Universities / Institutes in the order of their preference of study. The admission, as far as possible, shall be given as per applicant's preference. However, there may be a situation when students do not get admission in their preferred Universities/Institutes due to limited number of seats on offer. ICCR is advising Universities/ Institutes to confirm 10-15 % more admissions over and above the available seats. Students should be prepared to receive admission from any of their five preferences. Mission is requested to consult ICCR HQ in certain cases where some particular universities / institutes are oversubscribed and the next preference will have to be exercised.
- v) For AY 2021-22, a 500-word essay in English has been introduced to ascertain English Proficiency. Besides, students can also submit their TOFEL/ IELTS etc. Standardised Test scores, if available. ICCR is also requesting universities/ institutes to conduct interview of the applicants online, if so required. There will be no separate English test by Missions, which was one reason for delay in processing. Depending on the institute's requirement, student may have to submit additional documents/evidence of knowledge in the specialised field of dance, music, theatre, art, etc. for this scholarship. Applicants must go through institute's website carefully for such additional requirements.
- vi) Rejected candidates will be intimated by Universities. In the current system, students remain hopeful of admission as universities do not communicate rejection. We have requested universities to inform students if their application is rejected.
- vii) ICCR has introduced disbursement of all scholarship payment to students through PFMS w.e.f. February, 2021. This is as per GOI guidelines on direct payment to beneficiaries.

3. A nodal officer who has adequate technical knowledge to handle the **A2A Portal** may be identified by each Mission. The guidelines of all schemes are available on the Portal and it should be used for disseminating amongst the interested candidates applying for admission through ICCR. This officer will also be responsible for scrutinizing all the online admissions and forwarding the same with his/her signature. All missions may like to use the scholarship e-brochure recently brought out by ICCR for publicity of ICCR scholarships (available in e-book section of ICCR website and **A2A Portal** and was emailed to all missions). Missions may perhaps reach out to Ministry of Education, universities/schools/prominent educational institutions and make presentations on ICCR scholarships; hold roadshows to popularise the scholarship schemes.

4. While publicizing the scheme, please advise interested students to visit university / institute website and do thorough research of courses offered, eligibility criteria and general information about the university / institute before applying for admission. The students should ensure that they are eligible for the course and meet the eligibility criteria and should submit relevant documentation as required by the Universities in addition to the basic certificates mentioned in the application form. They should always refer to the Universities Handbook / University Grants Commission's website and the concerned university / institute's website for eligibility criteria etc.

5. These scholarship slots include **return economy class airfare to the nearest airport and 3rd AC Train fare to the place of study, if so required.** Mission is requested to provide one way air-ticket to the selected scholars. Mission may please ensure that no student claims reimbursement of airfare in India.

6. Mission must ensure that applicants are 18 years age at the time of admission in Indian Universities / Institutes and not more than 30 years of age. During the process of confirming admission, it has come to light that some foreign students are under 18 years of age. Consequently, they are not permitted to open Saving Banks Accounts which is required for releasing their scholarship.
7. It is also important to ensure that a scholarship is awarded only after the Mission is satisfied that student is serious in studying in India; has no serious health problems; has not submitted incomplete / fraudulent documentation which might lead to embarrassing situations which may negate our objective of promoting goodwill through scholarships.
8. It should be highlighted that compulsory personal medical insurance is a mandatory requirement for availing of ICCR's scholarship. It is compulsory for all ICCR scholarship students to procure Medical Insurance policy with minimum sum assured for Indian Rupees Five Lakhs which is equivalent to US\$6800 per annum. Mission is requested to inform applicants that when they travel to India, they must have medical insurance coverage on their own either before travel or immediately after reaching India, whatever is convenient to students. Students can purchase medical insurance from any of the insurance companies of their choice. However to facilitate students, **A2A Portal** has two insurance companies for referral purpose. Missions should also make appropriate changes in their website / social media handles so that students who would be applying for ICCR scholarship for upcoming academic year are aware of the change in medical insurance policy. ICCR has uploaded the revised norms on its **A2A Portal**.
9. It would also be appreciated if the students are briefed properly about the provisions of ICCR and MEA's scholarship schemes. It is also essential that the applicant is given a realistic assessment of India, and of the living conditions in our country's educational institutions, as many scholars express grave misgivings on this account after their arrival in India. It may also be mentioned that ICCR may amend some provisions of scholarships from time to time and it is incumbent on students to accept the revised norms.
10. It would be appreciated if the Mission could proactively promote scholarship schemes so the best and brightest applicants are attracted and best applicants.
11. In order to ensure security of the foreign students, ICCR advises students to stay in hostel, if available. However, students are allowed to stay in private accommodation if the concerned institute does not insist on staying in their hostel.
12. Detailed guidelines on the process of applying for ICCR Scholarships online on the **A2A Portal** and the procedure and norms governing the same is given on the www.a2ascholarships.iccr.gov.in.
13. For any clarification/query, Shri Amit Sahai Mathur, Programme Director, Scholarship Division may be contacted on email: pdisd2.iccr@gov.in Landline No. +91-11-23379199 (Direct) / 23379309/10/14 (Extn: 1137).

Warm regards,



(Prashant Pise)