

**DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY  
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**Call for Proposals on ‘Development of Candidate Vaccines and Allied Research Resources for Diseases of National Priority’**

**Background**

Vaccines are one of the major cost-effective interventions in the global public health space. The importance of vaccines is underscored by global eradication of small pox and the near elimination of polio through vaccination. Globally, efforts are underway for development of: novel platform-based vaccines for emerging infectious diseases; improved adjuvant technologies; development of well-characterized animal models for pre-clinical testing; development of immunotherapeutic vaccines for non-communicable diseases such as cancers and allergies.

Focused efforts over the past few decades, have enabled development of promising vaccine candidates for infectious diseases such as Cholera, Influenza, Dengue, Chikungunya, Pneumococcal disease, Rabies, etc., which are in various stages of development. However, in the last few decades, a number of infectious diseases have emerged from wildlife or re-emerged, posing a serious public health threat.

Having enhanced indigenous capabilities in the field of vaccine development for priority pathogens of national and global importance is a pre-requisite in ensuring preparedness against such infectious threats. In view of the same, and in alignment with the World Health Organization (WHO) R&D Blueprint, as well as, the National Biotechnology Development Strategy 2021-25, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) invites Proposals on *“Development of Candidate Vaccines and Allied Research Resources for Diseases of National Priority”*.

**Scope of the Call**

Time-bound, outcome-oriented proposals, with respect to viral pathogens (Eg: *Zika virus*, *Kyasanur Forest Disease virus*, *Nipah virus*, *PAN-Henipaviridae*, *Coronavirus*, *PAN-Coronavirus*, *Pox virus*), are invited in the following areas:

- Development of new and improved vaccine candidates based on emerging platforms;
- Development of research resources: high quality well characterized pre-clinical animal models for diseases; development of assay systems for assessment of vaccine induced immune responses; identification of markers for quantification of antibody responses; establishment of reverse genetics systems and strategies for future vaccine development;

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- Rational approaches to antigen selection and multi-epitope vaccine design;
- Process optimization for scale-up and cGMP manufacturing of proven vaccine technologies.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

Any Indian National holding a regular position in a Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) recognized Indian academic and/or scientific institution may apply.

Eligible Organizations: Central Govt. Institutions/State Govt. Institutions/Private Institutions of higher education and research; recognized by DSIR. Private institutions/NGOs should also be registered with DARPAN Portal of NITI Aayog.

### **Evaluation Criteria and Financial Support**

Applications would be evaluated for scientific and technical merit as per the DBT Competitive Research Grant System guidelines. Briefly, the criteria would be originality of the proposed research; proven record of appropriate experience and training of the investigators; well-reasoned strategy and methodology; robust work plan; well-articulated proposal; requisite institutional infrastructure and support facilities.

Proposals received will be screened and short-listed for funding support by the Technical Expert Committee/DBT Apex Board, as per the Competitive Research Grant System Guidelines (CRGS) of DBT.

Funding procedures and eligible costs are subject to National regulations and will be in alignment with DBT norms. DBT will provide financial support only to an academic and/or scientific institution as mentioned in eligibility criteria above. The subsequent year funding depends upon timely submission of the annual progress report, financial documents, as well as, other documents desired and based on the performance appraisal of the project.

**How to Apply:** Interested investigators should submit project proposals **online only** through DBT electronic project management system 'eProMIS' (<http://dbtepromis.nic.in/Login.aspx>) under the Programme "Vaccine Research & Development" per DBT e-ProMIS format, clearly stating "Against Call for Proposals". No hard copy would be entertained. The proposals submitted through DBT eProMIS portal under "Vaccine Research & Development" programme within the due date will only be considered by the Department.

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**Timeline**

Call for Proposal opens: **22.12.2022**

Call for Proposal closes: **20.01.2023**

**Any queries may be addressed to:**

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