

## **ASSAM AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

### **Introduction**

With increasing importance of agriculture in national and international trade, new opportunities have opened up for effective and efficient transfer of knowledge, skills and technologies to the end-users. The changed times are more encouraging and rewarding than before for our scientists and staff. New opportunities can be more enriching for research and development in terms of both application of expertise as well as revenue generation to the individuals and the institution. It is felt that interactive processes through consultancy services for external agencies shall further:

- i) enhance research and education capability,
- ii) improve core competencies, work efficiency and environment; and
- iii) augment visibility of our professional strengths.

### **Scope of Consultancy Services**

Consultancy shall mean professional services rendered to external agencies<sup>1</sup> in terms of scientific, technical, engineering or other professional advice/assistance based on the expert knowledge and skill available in AAU. All consultancy services in AAU shall be institutional and shall be in the area of expertise of the individual(s).

[<sup>1</sup>external agencies shall mean institutions from outside the jurisdiction of AAU.]

### **Consultancy services can *inter alia* include<sup>2</sup>:**

- i. *preparation of literature/survey/feasibility studies/state of art project/technology forecasting/evaluation reports;*
- ii. *interpretation of test results and data, advising on risks and hazards or similar skilled advice;*
- iii. *advisory tasks in preparation, evaluation and implementation of a project;*
- iv. *advisory tasks in design engineering related to agriculture and allied sciences;*
- v. *assistance in management of public health and animal health issues, and other health problems;*
- vi. *assistance in management of biotic and abiotic stress issues and other problems;*
- vii. *technical advice in the form of one time assistance to help in trouble shooting or problem solving, mainly advisory in nature, including pilot plant/up-scaling trials for technology validation and commercialization.*

[<sup>2</sup>These guidelines are not applicable to contract research like testing of product/ variety/ agro-chemicals of companies for validation and commercialization. The existing norm/ procedure shall continue until guidelines for contract research are developed.]

Consultancy service is envisaged as an activity to assist an external organization in finding a solution to specific scientific/technical/managerial problem(s) or performing a task for it in return for

monetary consideration. A consultancy project, however, is to be distinguished from a research project and any technical work requiring research and development activity with substantial use of institutional infrastructure and time of the staff shall be taken up as contract research rather than consultancy. Inclusion of scientists and staff in their official capacity in boards/committees/bodies of national/government/public sector institutions within the country shall not be considered as consultancy service.

#### **Processing of the proposal for Consultancy Services**

**1. Understanding the proposal for selection of the leader and team of consultant(s):**

Consultancy assignments involve high level skill, work efficiency, and scientific and systems approach, and contributes to image building of the institute/system. Therefore, decision on selection<sup>3</sup> of the personnel should be made on the basis of the nature of work involved and capability of particular persons, and not on the basis of hierarchy. At the same time, total work in hand with an individual is also to be considered. Thus, a fair distribution of consultancy work should be ensured so that it is not confined to a few and specific individuals. The client may approach the expert concerned directly or the Head of Office of an AAU establishment for consultancy services, and the consultancy project should be evolved through mutual discussion between the client and the expert(s).

[<sup>3</sup>An expert for a consultancy service may be selected by the Head of Office through a committee constituted by him/her, if so desired.]

**2. Outlines of work and terms of reference in the consultancy proposals to be completed:**

After a decision, the outlines of work and terms of reference will be as per the level of information desired and the facilities needed. The procedures and programmes to be followed should be mutually agreed upon.

**3. Limitation to consultancy by an individual:** An individual scientist/staff will not be allowed to accept consultancy for a total period exceeding 50 days in a calendar year. If the total period of consultancy in a year exceeds 50 days, approval shall be taken from the Vice Chancellor for relaxation on merit.

**4. Leave requirement for undertaking consultancy:** In case the consultancy work requires significant absence from normal duties of the individual, the individual shall apply through proper channel to the Head of Office for duty leave for the period of consultancy service.

The Head of Office shall process and keep record of the consultancy services. It shall ensure that the proposal is in conformity with these rules and guidelines, and submit the proposal to the competent authority for approval in the proforma prescribed in Annexure I. Consultancies with ICAR/ UN/CGIAR bodies or other similar bodies can be settled/ approved only through

letters instead of proforma details. Proposals shall be processed and decision taken as early as possible, preferably within one month of the initiation.

#### **Competent Authority to Approve Consultancy**

- i. Proposals with national agencies up to Rs. 50 lakhs- Controlling Officer of the expert
- ii. Proposals with national agencies beyond Rs. 50 lakhs –Vice Chancellor, AAU, Jorhat

#### **Costing of Consultancy Project and payment**

The costs for consultancy projects shall be worked out after taking into account expenses connected with the consultancy proposal, intellectual fees, and any other costs specific to the proposal, including mandatory taxes (such as service tax) as applicable, which shall be paid by the client. The consultancy project cost shall be arrived at by mutual discussion between the client and the head of office including the expert. The client shall offer 50% as upfront payment and the rest amount after completion of the project. Consultancy fees shall be deposited to designated account of AAU.

The expenses related to a consultancy proposal shall include all operational expenses (such as TA/DA) and any other Direct Costs or any other cost specific to the project if applicable; intellectual fee and service tax.

The minimum charges should ideally be equal to the charges for man-days, except in case of consultancy offered against open tenders, where the intellectual fee could be decided by the competent authority keeping in view the potential competition.

#### **Sharing of Intellectual Fees**

Before the sharing of intellectual fees, it should, however, be ensured that all expenses incurred in connection with the consultancy project are recovered first. Thereafter, the intellectual fees including such fees received in the form of honorarium/ consultancy fees/ consultancy charges etc. shall be shared, subject to the provision of annual ceiling, as per details given below.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Share</b>
Consultant(s)	70%
Institutional income	30%

This amount shall not include travel charges, per diem charges, incidental charges or hospitality offered by the client to the consultant(s) directly. The consultant(s) charges (70% as above) shall be shared among the consultant team as deemed appropriate by mutual discussion, considering the role of members of the consultant team. The team members shall certify their percentage involvement in the project.

The manpower charges would vary for different categories. The minimum per day rates chargeable shall be one-day's gross salary of the concerned scientist/staff, appropriately rounded off. In case of longer duration projects, mandays cost may be charged on the basis of effective number of days to be devoted to carry out the work.

***TA/DA cost***

TA/DA costs shall comprise payments on travel and daily allowances of the AAU staff visiting/travelling for the work related to the consultancy. The Head of Office should recover from the client at least the actual expenditure incurred by it on TA/DA to its staff deputed for work relating to project and ensure that the TA/DA and per diem allowances are not less than that of prescribed by AAU.

***Cost of Consumables/chemicals/glassware/raw materials /components***

If consumables are required, the cost shall be charged as 100% cost in advance.

***Equipment usage costs***

If the consultancy involves usage of AAU equipments the element of depreciation of assets will be taken into account while fixing charges for use of equipments etc. owned by AAU; and charges for usage shall be based on *pro-rata* basis on an annual usage charge @ 20% of cost of equipment and installation.

***Institutional charges (cost of physical inputs/services/utilities)***

The expenses are incurred towards physical inputs/services/utilities incurred by the institution for activities such as to provide infrastructure facilities (electricity, water, gas, steam etc.), bench space, building, farm and machinery, workshop; and administrative and fiscal management services etc. Therefore, each project shall be charged @ 10% of the total cost of the project; commensurate with the activities envisaged in the project.

***Insurance cover***

It would be pertinent to provide extra insurance cover for the scientist/staff members working in the sponsored consultancy. Appropriate financial provision for the same may be kept while working out the costs of a project.

***Contingencies***

The quantum of contingency charges would vary for each project as may be mutually agreed between the Head of Office and the sponsor. However, estimated contingency charges up to 10% of total project costs are normal.

### ***Intellectual fee***

Intellectual fee reflects charges for the investment made by AAU over the period of time, in building up and sustaining the extant level of expertise, skills, knowledge base and facilities. The amount may be offered by the external agency, or proposed by the consultant(s)/ Controlling Officer, or may even be mutually decided between the two parties. However, the reasons, justifying the concession should be specifically indicated in the project proposal put up for approval.

### ***Taxes payable***

All taxes shall be charged, as applicable in Govt. of India regulations, on the date of receipt of payment and have to be adjusted/ debited to the project account.

### ***Ceiling on benefit sharing payments***

A financial year from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March shall be considered as the annual period. The ceiling of benefit share of an individual in a year is Rs. 10 lakh. The powers for payments up to Rs.10 lakhs per annum as share of benefit to an individual shall rest with the concerned Controlling Officer of AAU with approval of the Vice Chancellor, while any payments over and above Rs. 10 lakhs per head per annum shall be reviewed and approved by the Vice Chancellor on merit.

### ***Feedback to AAU Headquarters***

The consultancy shall be deemed to have completed only when the obligation(s) envisaged in the proposed project are fulfilled and the entire amount of consultancy fees due from the client is received. Information on consultancy projects completed shall be furnished in the AAU Headquarters as and when asked in the proforma provided as Annexure-2.

**Proforma for Submitting Consultancy Proposals**

1. Name of the Establishment:
2. Title of the proposed Project (including brief of the project):
3. Scope of the Consultancy work:
  - i. Preparation of literature/survey/feasibility studies/state of art project/technology forecasting/ evaluation reports
  - ii. Interpretation of test results and data, advising on risks and hazards or similar skilled advice
  - iii. Advisory tasks in evaluation and implementation of a project
  - iv. Design engineering related to agriculture
  - v. Assistance in management of pests and other entomological problems
  - vi. Technical advice in the form of one time assistance to help in trouble shooting, or problem solving, mainly advisory in nature
  - vii. Any other (specify)
4. Detailed objectives of the consultancy project:
5. Duration of the project (give specific dates and period):
6. Programme of work and phasing of milestones:
7. Whether the physical or other infrastructural facilities available at the Institute are required for carrying out project: Yes/No  
If yes, give justification.
8. Name and address of the consultant(s) undertaking the project:  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Designation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Previous consultancy work undertaken by the consultant(s) during the past one year

Title of Project	Sponsoring agency	Period			Total cost of project	Total intellectual fee received	
		From (date)	To (date)	Duration (days)		In the project	By the consultant

10. Whether the project requires foreign visit by the consultant(s): Yes/No  
If yes, attach the check-list for foreign deputation
11. Whether the consultant(s) would require leave for carrying out the work: Yes/No  
If No: provide justification as to how the consultancy would be done while discharging official duties.

12. Sponsoring agency:
- a. Name and address:
  - b. Status:  
 Indian: Central Government/Government Undertaking/State Government/Private organisation/NGO/ other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Foreign: U.N. agency/CGIAR Institute/Private Organisation/or other International Agency (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
13. Activities of sponsor in brief:
- 13 (a). Additional information in case of foreign sponsoring/collaborating agency:
- i. Details of past collaborations, if any, by the collaborator/sponsor with the applicant Station/Department/KVK/Directorate of AAU/ other Indian institution(s), whatever is known
  - ii. Details, if any, available on R&D projects of sensitive nature and concerned with national security, taken up and/or funded by the sponsor/collaborator in the past in its own country or any other country, whatever is known
  - iii. Genesis of the project
  - iv. Foreign support/collaboration (details):
  - v. Financial support (Rs. & Foreign Exchange)
  - vi. Any other support
  - vii. Justification/need and likely benefits (scientific, economic, societal, strategic etc.)
14. Does the project involve?
- a. Referring to or sourcing of strategic/sensitive material/information. Yes/No
  - b. Transfer of biological material(s) to the collaborator/sponsor. Yes/No
  - c. Use of genetically modified organisms. Yes/No
  - d. Use of environmentally or otherwise hazardous material(s). Yes/No
  - e. Use of radioactive materials. Yes/No
  - f. Field surveys/trials/proving/collection/testing (give location). Yes/No
  - g. Ethical issues in conduct of the project. Yes/No
- If answer to any of the points from (a) to (g) is 'yes', the consultant to give undertaking to abide by relevant and extant ICAR/ national regulations and guidelines on the subject.
15. Total outlay of the project:  
 (Provide break-up for different Operational Heads as given below)
1. Direct Expenses (including TA/DA cost); if any:
  2. Intellectual fee:
  3. Any other cost specific to the project if any:
  4. Service tax:
16. Schedule of payment of fees (indicate amount of each installment, due date of payment and bank guarantees)
17. Intellectual fees payable to the consultant(s), a brief of calculations with reasons:
18. Whether Intellectual Property Rights issues are involved in the consultancy project. If yes,

are they in conformity with AAU Guidelines for IPMTTC; if not, the variation be indicated and explained with justification for approval of the competent authority.

19. Whether a written communication/Agreement indicating the Terms of Reference has been received from the external agency. If yes, enclose a copy along with comments; if no, provide justification.
20. Detailed project document: *(Enclose)*

Certified that the overall institutional/ organisational or national interests do not suffer in any way with the acceptance of the consultancy project.

Signature  
Consultant(s)

(To be forwarded by Head of Department/ Chief Scientist/ Head of KVK to the Head of the Establishment of AAU)

The consultancy service proposal shall be referred to the IPR Cell of AAU

**Recommendation of IPR Cell:**

1. Certified that the proposal has been considered as per procedure and is found to in conformity with AAU rules and guidelines.
2. It has been examined and ensured that:
  - i. the acceptance of the project is befitting the academic status of the Institute. Yeas/ No
  - ii. the amount of all charges and intellectual fee is commensurate with fees chargeable as per costing guidelines. Yes/ No
  - iii. the return to AAU is commensurate with the potential and likely gains to the client as a transfer if in-house knowledge, skill or technology. Yes/ No
  - iv. the project would contribute to the knowledge and professional competence in the Department/ Station/ KVK. Yes/ No
  - v. in case the answer to any of the questions from i to iv is 'No', please provide justification.
3. Any other comment:

Signature with date & Seal  
IPR Cell I/C

Approval of the Head of the Establishment

Signature with date & Seal  
Head of the Establishment





Signature with date  
Consultant(s)

Counter signature of the Head of the Establishment