

UPSC Civil Services Examination

Political Science & International Relations

Topic: - Prime Minister's Research Fellowship Scheme - Indian Polity Notes

What is the PMRF Scheme?

PMRF Scheme is a **public-private partnership** (PPP) between Science & Engineering Research Board (SERB), which is an autonomous body under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

- The scheme aims at improving the quality of research by attracting the best talents across the country and reducing brain drain.
- Under the scheme, around 1000 students who have completed B.Tech or integrated M.Tech or M.Sc in Science and Technology streams or are in the final year, will be **offered direct admission into the PhD programme**, post the selection process, in the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)/ Indian Institute of Science (IISc) with a fixed amount of fellowship for five years.
- In order to enable the aspirants to participate in international research conferences and present research papers, **a research grant of Rs.2 lakhs will be provided to each of them for a period of 5 years.**
- According to the scheme, in a span of 3 years, a maximum of 3000 Fellows would be selected.
- The necessary budgetary support to all Institutions including IITs and IISc, inter-alia for up-gradation of research is provided by the Government under this scheme.

Several initiatives were launched in order to capture highly skilled researchers and scientists which will help them pursue further research and development within the country itself. Some of the examples of such initiatives are:

- Faculty Recharge Programme
- CV Raman Post-Doctoral Fellowship Scheme by University Grants Commission (UGC)
- Ramanujan Fellowship
- JC Bose Fellowship
- Swarnajayanti Fellowship
- Young Scientist Project Award
- Women Scientist Scheme by the Department of Science & Technology (DST)
- Ramalingaswami Re-entry Fellowship by Department of Biotechnology

Science & Engineering Research Board (SERB)

Science & Engineering Research Board is a statutory body established through an Act of Parliament. Supporting basic research in emerging areas of Science & Engineering is the primary mandate of the Board. The Board is vested with both financial and administrative powers to enable quicker decisions on research issues, to greatly improve the responsiveness to the genuine needs of the research scientists and the S&T system.

UPSC Questions related to PMRF Scheme

What is the selection process for the PMRF Scheme?

- The selection process is quite meticulous that starts with a two-stage process and a screening by the Reviewers followed by the final stage of selection. In order to ensure selection of the best talent, the final selection is done by a Selection Committee for each broad discipline.
- The shortlisting and selection will be done in the following manner:
 - A team of experts will assess the applications at each Nodal Institute (NI) and prepare a shortlist of applicants for written test and/or interview.
 - Then the Nodal Institute will conduct a written test and/or interview there for the shortlisted applicants.
 - Based on the performance in the interview, final selection of shortlisted applicants is made.
 - Each NI would first indicate whether the candidate has to appear in the written test or not.

Why was the PMRF Scheme introduced?

- The Government of India launched the PMRF Scheme to promote research with the focus on national priorities by initiating research in cutting-edge technologies and science areas. It also wanted to attract credible students into research. PMRF Scheme will offer these meritorious group of students admission directly to Ph.D programmes in the top institutes of the country like IITs, IISERs and IISc.