

**MINUTES OF THE FIRST RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
ON APRIL 29, 2019 AT 11.00 A.M.**

Members present

Dr Leena Srivastava, Chairperson
Dr Arun Kansal
Prof Yogendra Singh
Dr Sejal Worah
Dr Rajesh Tandon
Dr Atul Kumar
Dr Sudipta Chatterjee
Dr Fawzia Tarannum
Dr Shashi Bhushan Tripathi
Dr Sapna Narula
Dr Smriti Das
Dr Jaya Vasudevan
Capt Pradeep Kumar Padhy (Retd.), Secretary

Special invitees
Prof J K Garg
Dr Vinay S Sinha

Dr OS Sastry and Dr Fawzia Tarannum could not attend the meeting. As this was the first meeting of RAC, a multimedia presentation about the University was given.

The Chairperson welcomed all the members to the first meeting of the RAC and apprised the members about University's strong research base and stated that several of the faculty members are involved in sponsored research in addition to doctoral research supervision. She briefed the members that there are many research areas in which the University needs to move faster hence the University felt it would be advantageous to set up focused research centers in terms of research as against academic. She stated that the University expects to be advised by the Research Advisory Committee to provide a focused direction towards all research activities.

Item 1. Discussion on "Policy on Establishing and Operationalizing Research Centers at TERI SAS". Draft copy of the proposed policy was presented to the committee (Enclosure). Dr Arun Kansal provided background on the establishment of the research centres at TERI SAS. He stated that the research centres would be housed within the university but will be working on cross cutting themes. On the financial sustainability of research centres, the Chairperson informed that since TERI SAS is self-funding university the research centres are also required to be assisted through outside sources. The Committee reviewed the policy and concurred with its various provisions. Dr Sejal Worah suggested that research centre on Social and Ecological Sciences would be a good area. The Chair request Head, DPS to consult with Dr Worah in this regard.

Item 2. Presentation by Departments about their medium- and long-term research plans and strategies to achieve defined goals. Dr. Arun Kansal, Dean (Research & Relationship)

informed the members that three departments would present their medium- and long-term research plans and strategies.

(a) Department of Natural Resources. Dr Sudipto Chatterjee, Head of Dept of Natural Resources (DNR) made a presentation on the short-term strategic plan of DNR. He apprised the RAC members of the structure, functioning of the Department in its present form, areas of work by both the Faculty and Researchers, nature of publications emanating from the Department and Courses undertaken. Dr Chatterjee shared with RAC, the inherent strengths of the Department and the challenges it faces, based on which a long-term vision and mission and a short-term strategic plan has been drafted. Induction of proposed new courses and training programmes and fund-raising strategies were also discussed. The short-term Strategic Planning in Funded research through projects and grants (3 years) included: Restoration and rejuvenation of degraded natural ecosystems, Usage of advanced technologies in NRM, Climate Change and extreme weather conditions, Air pollution impacts on natural ecosystems and Disasters, risk & reduction. He explained that the DNR faced a number of challenges which included Absence of domain expertise in marine ecosystems, Inadequate infrastructure to accommodate developments in the fields of electronics and communications, AI and IOT and inadequate capacity to garner a greater number of International grants & establish lead positions in partnerships. Dr. Rajesh Tandon wanted to know whether there are any plans of the Department regarding upcoming campus at Hyderabad and Guwahati. Chairperson informed that for the present we are not concentrating on Guwahati campus. Dr. Rajesh Tandon informed that north-east has got huge potential about species related programme. Hence the Department can think about some long-term plan in that area. Dr Sejal Worah, Programme Director, WWF India suggested that long term research plan be also drawn up as what has been described in the presentation related to department specific one. Dr Chatterjee stated that one such long term opportunity in nitrogen is being followed up where complete funding to the extent of five years is available. He stated that this was an area where a centre could be developed.

(b) Department of Biotechnology Dr Shashi Bhushan Tripathi presented the research and development activities of Department of Biotechnology (DBT). The work done on flowering time in Brassica and ongoing work on root system architecture for nitrogen use efficiency was highly appreciated by the members. Dr Tandon said that there is great potential in the developmental biology work on Brassica. Dr Sejal Worah said that the area of food and protein is important, and the department could work on major crops. Dr Tripathi informed that the department is not focussing on major crops such as wheat, rice and maize because different ICAR institutions are already working on these crops with much bigger resources. Therefore, we collaborate with such institutes instead of competing with them. There is already a collaboration with Borlaug Institute for South Asia (BISA) on wheat. He stated that DBT was looking to work on

underutilized species where there is less competition. He informed that DBT had developed capacities in genotyping by sequencing (GBS), and is providing this service at competitive rates which helps to generate extra funds. The Chair informed that the University is thinking of setting up a Centre on Sustainable Agriculture and Food system where research activity on crops, protein etc. would be looked into in detail. Prof. Arun Kansal mentioned that department presentation did not provide any information about medium-term and long-term plans. To this Dr. Tripathi informed that the DBT would brainstorm on this to arrive at a future research plan.

(c) Department of Energy and Environment Dr Atul Kumar presented the research and development activities of Department of Energy and Environment (DEE). He explained that the Department worked in four research domain areas such as energy, environmental studies, climate change and urban development. He informed that the Department has a Centre of Excellence in Thermal Energy Storage (CoE-TES) which has been set up with initial funding by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. Dr Atul said research focus on energy includes broadly on the following areas: Renewable energy technologies, Sustainable built environment, energy, climate change and development linkages modelling of energy-economy-environment interaction and co-benefit analysis. Prof. J.K. Garg informed that the department could look into the areas of crop impacts modelling and food security besides wetlands. Dr Sejal Worah suggested that the area has got lot of wide-ranging work and a need existed to define the core area in future. She stated that policy briefs become very critical to guide the policy works and futuristic results would be important for the research centres.

Chairperson thanked the members for their inputs and suggestions. She stated that the in the next meeting which will be held at an early date where the RAC could discuss about funding opportunities for these centres. In addition, the balance departments of the University will present their research plans in this meeting.

There being no other points the meeting concluded.

Distribution
All members

**POLICY ON ESTABLISHING AND OPERATIONALISING RESEARCH CENTRES AT
TERI SAS**

1.0 Purpose. A guiding framework for establishing cross-cutting research centres and for the development of sponsored research activities in the University.

2.0 Scope. For this policy, ‘research¹/ projects²’ includes all research activities undertaken by TERI School of Advanced Studies (TERI SAS) staff. Research undertaken by students/ scholars leading to an academic degree will be governed by academic rules and guidelines of TERI SAS and is out of the purview of this policy.

3.0 Governance of Research Centres. All Research activities of the University are coordinated and facilitated by the Dean (Research and Relationships). However, each Research Centre will have a Centre Head with a term of five years that will be renewable subject to performance. A Steering/Advisory Committee for the Research Centre may be established depending on the conditions of support and need of the Centre.

4.0 Research Advisory Committee. The “Research Advisory Committee” at TERI School of Advanced Studies will not only provide guidance on the research activities/opportunities of/for the University but would also review a selection of projects in each meeting to provide guidance on outreach activities.

5.0 Research Centres. A proposal for establishment of any Research Centre shall be submitted to the Dean (Research & Relationships) with a clear business development strategy and plan. The Dean would constitute a Committee by inviting at least two relevant Professors/Associate Professors from across Departments for reviewing the Proposal. The approved proposal would be endorsed by the Vice Chancellor and submitted to the Board of Management for ratification. Approved Research Centres will be notified by the Registrar.

6.0 Administration of Centres

- (a) The Head of the centre will be appointed by the VC for a period of five years either from within the faculty or outside. The term of the incumbent Head would be renewable subject to performance.
- (b) The Research Centre would be staffed by fixed term employees on a renewable contract with the specific mandate of contributing to the evolution of the centre as a net revenue generating entity.
- (c) Faculty of the University may be attached as a researcher in more than one Research Centre or may be associated with one or more of the projects in a Research Centre.

¹ Research include: Basic/theoretical/applied/experimental development/problem-oriented/ new knowledge development related research

² Projects connected to any of the above research activities

Regular association with a Research Centre, even on a part-time basis, would imply applicability of responsibilities of a Centre Researcher.

(d) The equivalence of research staff with faculty members would be as follows: -

Research Staff Designation	Remuneration as per UGC levels approved for
Research Associate	Lecturer
Associate Fellow	Assistant Professor
Fellow	Associate Professor
Senior Fellow	Professor

Their salaries would be fixed in a manner consistent with the levels in which they are being absorbed.

(e) The selection of Research staff will be made based on relevant research experience in specific field assessed by a Selection Committee constituted by the Vice Chancellor. The Committee will consist of the following: -

- (i) Vice Chancellor
- (ii) Dean (R&R)
- (iii) Centre Head and/or Project Coordinator

(f) The staff of the Research Centres can hold concurrent affiliation in department and centre(s) if found eligible, in an appropriate category following due process.

(g) Research Centres will be required to maintain a list of assets held by it for annual audit by University Administration.

(h) The Centres will be required to present their annual activity report to the Research Advisory Committee for review and discussion.

7.0 Heads of Departments/Centres shall collaborate with the following committees constituted by the Vice Chancellor for strengthening the Research process in the University.

- a) Research Ethics Committee: To look at all ethical aspects of research including ethical clearance, wherever required.
- b) Institutional Bio Safety Committee (IBSC): To look at bio safety related matters and clearances given by the committee.
- c) Academic Department/Centre research committee: On matter related to development and implementation of research plans and extension activities of the Academic Department/Centre.
- d) Innovation and Entrepreneurship Incubation Cell.
- e) Institutional Academic Integrity Panel.
- f) IP and Technology Transfer Cell

8.0 Procedure for Project management. Project Monitoring Cell, functioning under the Dean (Research and Relationships) shall be the repository of all proposals/projects in the University, including those of the Centres, and shall facilitate initiation, implementation, closure and archiving of projects.

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