
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

NCAER-IDRC DOCTORAL AND POST DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIPS ON DECENTRALISATION AND GOVERNANCE

The National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) New Delhi, India announces the NCAER-IDRC doctoral and post doctoral scholarships. Applications are invited from young (less than 35 years of age at the time of application) doctoral candidates and newly graduated PhDs in economics, applied economics, and political science (with a strong training in applied economic analysis) to work in a research program funded by the IDRC.

The proposed program of research will concentrate on the mechanics of service delivery of public goods to rural households in India within a framework of decentralised decision making. The reason for non-inclusive growth in many poorer countries can be attributed to coordination failure. Coordination failure is defined as an outcome in which, a group of economic agents is unable to attain a desirable and potentially achievable equilibrium owing to the fact that they are currently trapped in less than desirable equilibrium. We are interested in analyzing the impact of coordination failure on the rural households and, in particular on the poorer households. Access to and effective provision of public goods is particularly critical for the rural poor since this will help in realizing their potential and escape poverty. We propose to show that decentralisation and, the creation of appropriate institutions within this framework is an optimal solution for overcoming coordination failures and to bring about inclusive growth. Decentralisation allows for better governance and service delivery and could either lead to the formation of pro poor institutions or, set in motion the processes necessary to transform existing institutions into ones that are more pro poor.

The research program involves finding answers to the following questions. i) Is there evidence of elite capture and corruption in decentralised forms of governance? ii) Will decentralisation increase fiscal buoyancy? iii) Does decentralisation reduce coordination failure? iv) Does decentralisation empower women and other disadvantaged groups? v) Is service delivery through decentralised forms of government relatively efficient compared to service delivery under more centralised frameworks? vi) How does decentralisation affect the impact of affirmative action programmes? vii) Are outcomes pertaining to health and education "more optimal" under decentralised regimes compared to more centralised ones?

The selection of candidates for the program will be based on an evaluation of the applications and supporting documents by the core research committee at NCAER. Renewal of the scholarship beyond the initial period will also be determined by this committee.

Application

Doctoral Scholarships

- a) **Eligibility:** The applicants for the doctoral fellowships must be doctoral candidates (for applicants from universities outside India the applicants must be declared as admitted to candidacy). They must have passed all qualifying and field examinations and have a well defined research proposal approved by the doctoral committee. The applicants must be below the age of 35 years at the time of application for the scholarship. (The applicants can be of any nationality with permits to reside and work in India)
- b) **Documentation:** The applicants should include a clearly articulated statement of how their tenure at NCAER will help with their doctoral dissertations. This should be approved by the chairperson of the dissertation committee. A letter to this effect from the chairperson should accompany the application.
- c) **Proposal:** The research proposal should have a clear statement of problem(s), methodology, outcomes, relationship with the NCAER research program and possible data sources. Successful applicants will have the opportunity to use the NCAER ARIS/REDS, and HDPI data sets while in residence.
- d) **Work plan:** Successful applicants will collaborate with members of the core research team (Dr. Nagarajan (project leader), Dr. Bhide, Dr. Raghbendra Jha (Professor, ANU), and Dr. D.B.Gupta. It is expected that they complete at least two papers per residency episode co-authored (preferably) or otherwise of high quality and publishable in journals of repute, and, present their research output in seminars.
- e) **Residency:** The scholarships are awarded for a minimum period of 4 months. These can be renewed up to 18 months. Scholarships will be paid only during residency at NCAER
- f) **Payments:** The applicants will be paid INR 35000 per month. For international and outstation candidates, travel expenses will be covered. The candidates will be provided with adequate work space and computer support.

Applications should include the following. a) The research proposal approved by the doctoral committee. b) Proposal of research (inclusive of specific research questions, methodology, data sources, etc) at NCAER with an accompanying letter from the chairperson of the dissertation committee outlining the usefulness and relationship of the research while at NCAER to the dissertation c) statement of links of results of your work with the NCAER's program of research. d) period of stay at NCAER. Send these documents along with a letter of application to Dr. Hari K. Nagarajan (Senior Fellow, and Project leader NCAER-IDRC project on Decentralisation and Governance) by email (hknagarajan@ncaer.org). The last date for receiving the applications is July 15, 2009. Final decisions will be made and communicated by the end of August 2009.

Post Doctoral Scholarships

We wish to offer scholarships to newly graduated students with PhDs in Economics (specialization in micro theory), Applied Economics (with adequate training in econometrics of household data), and, Political Science (with training in microeconomics, game theory) in order to be part of the research team at NCAER. We are looking for candidates who may wish to have a longer stake in the organization. There is a possibility that a select few may be absorbed into the regular cadre of NCAER. We are therefore primarily interested in candidates who are Indian nationals.

- a) **Application:** The applicants will be newly graduated PhDs from reputed institutions and below the age of 35 years at the time of application for scholarship. The area of specializations will be restricted to microeconomic theory, applied economics (with emphasis on the econometrics of household data), and political science (with emphasis on research based on micro data).
- b) **Documentation:** All applicants should submit a copy of their dissertation abstracts, copies of completed papers, and two letters of recommendation.
- c) **Proposal:** The research proposal is a significant and vital ingredient for a successful application. The applicants should submit a detailed work plan that will be carried out during their residency at NCAER. The proposal should clearly state the research problem, methodology, data, and links with the NCAER research project on decentralisation and governance and possible outputs.
- d) **Payment:** The successful candidates will be paid INR 45000 per month during the duration of their residency. Outstation candidates will be reimbursed their costs of travel to and from New Delhi. The post doctoral scholarships are for a minimum residency of 6 months at a time renewable for a maximum period of 18 months.

Applicants should send all relevant documents to Dr Hari K. Nagarajan (Senior Fellow, and Project leader NCAER-IDRC project on Decentralisation and Governance) by email (hknagarajan@ncaer.org). The last date for receiving the applications is July 15, 2009. The applications will be evaluated by the core research committee of the IDRC-NCAER project. The final decision will be communicated by the end of August 2009.