VELS

INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ADVANCED STUDIES (VISTAS)
(Deemed to be University Estd. u/s 3 of the UGC Act, 1956)
PALLAVARAM, THALAMBUR, PERIYAPALAYAM, THIRUVANMIYUR, ADYAR - CHENNAI

Fellowship / Scholarship Policy for Ph.D. Programmes





FELLOWSHIP / SCHOLARSHIP POLICY FOR Ph.D. PROGRAMMES

Policy No.: VISTAS/RESEARCH/PH.D./FSP/2026
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Review Period: At least once in three years or as and when required

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1. PREAMBLE

Vels Institute of Science, Technology and Advanced Studies (VISTAS) is committed to promoting quality research, innovation and academic excellence and to providing an enabling environment for scholars pursuing doctoral research. The Fellowship / Scholarship Policy for the Ph.D. Programme is formulated to provide structured financial support to eligible Full-Time Research Scholars and fee concession to eligible Internal Part-Time Research Scholars of VISTAS. The Policy shall be implemented in accordance with VISTAS Ph.D. Admission Policy, applicable VISTAS Ph.D. Regulations, UGC Regulations and other statutory requirements, as amended from time to time. The provisions of this Policy shall be subject to the availability of funds and approval of the competent authority.

2. OBJECTIVES

a. To encourage high-quality doctoral research and innovation at VISTAS.
b. To provide financial support to eligible Full-Time Research Scholars.
c. To promote faculty and staff development through doctoral research.
d. To strengthen the research ecosystem and research output of VISTAS.
e. To encourage meritorious scholars to pursue doctoral research at VISTAS.
f. To provide a structured and transparent framework for the award, continuation and discontinuation of fellowship / scholarship support.

3. CATEGORIES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Financial support under this Policy shall be provided under the following categories:

3.1 VISTAS Research Fellowship (VRF) – Full-Time Research Scholars

Eligible Full-Time Research Scholars admitted to the Ph.D. Programme may be considered for the VISTAS Research Fellowship (VRF), subject to the eligibility conditions, selection process, availability of fellowship positions / funds and approval of the competent authority.

The fellowship shall be provided at the following rates:

Category of School	Monthly Fellowship
School of Engineering	₹30,000/-
School of Pharmaceutical Sciences	₹30,000/-
School of Physiotherapy	₹30,000/-
School of Management Studies	₹30,000/-
School of Law	₹30,000/-
School of Basic Sciences	₹25,000/-
School of Life Sciences	₹25,000/-
School of Commerce & Economics	₹25,000/-
School of Computing Sciences & Hotel and Catering Management	₹25,000/-

The above fellowship rates may be revised by the competent authority from time to time.

3.1.1 Tenure

The VISTAS Research Fellowship shall be awarded for a period of up to three years or until submission of the Ph.D. thesis, whichever is earlier, subject to fulfilment of the conditions prescribed under this Policy and VISTAS Ph.D. Regulations. The fellowship period shall ordinarily be reckoned from the date specified in the fellowship sanction order.

3.1.2 Conditions for Continuation

a. Satisfactory academic and research progress.
b. Compliance with the prescribed attendance requirements.
c. Satisfactory performance in the periodic / annual research progress review.
d. Compliance with VISTAS Ph.D. Regulations and other applicable rules.
e. Submission of progress reports and other documents as prescribed by VISTAS.
f. Continued fulfilment of the eligibility conditions for the fellowship.

VISTAS may review the continuation of the fellowship based on the recommendations of the Research Supervisor, Research Advisory Committee / School or Departmental Research Committee and other competent academic authorities, as applicable.

3.1.3 External Fellowship / Scholarship

A scholar receiving financial support under the VISTAS Research Fellowship shall not simultaneously avail another fellowship / scholarship for the same Ph.D. programme from UGC, CSIR, ICMR, ICSSR, industry or any other external agency. A scholar who becomes eligible for or receives an external fellowship / scholarship during the tenure of the VRF shall immediately inform VISTAS and shall not continue to draw both fellowships simultaneously. Upon acceptance of an external fellowship, the VISTAS Research Fellowship shall be discontinued from the date determined by the competent authority.

3.2 FEE CONCESSION – INTERNAL PART-TIME RESEARCH SCHOLARS

VISTAS faculty members, non-teaching staff and eligible research personnel pursuing the Ph.D. Programme under the Internal Part-Time category may be considered for a fee concession of up to 50% of the applicable prescribed Ph.D. fees, subject to the approval of the competent authority.

a. The concession shall be applicable for the duration of the Ph.D. Programme, subject to the scholar continuing to satisfy the conditions prescribed under this Policy and VISTAS Ph.D. Regulations.
b. The exact fee components to which the concession applies shall be determined by VISTAS from time to time through the appropriate competent authority.
c. The concession shall not be treated as a monthly fellowship or stipend and shall not entitle the scholar to any additional financial benefit unless specifically approved by VISTAS.

3.2.1 Eligibility and Continuation

The fee concession may be granted to eligible VISTAS employees / research personnel who:

a. Are duly admitted to the Ph.D. Programme under the applicable VISTAS regulations.
b. Fulfil the requirements prescribed for the Internal Part-Time category.
c. Obtain the required institutional permission / NOC wherever applicable.
d. Maintain satisfactory academic and research progress.
e. Comply with VISTAS Ph.D. Regulations and applicable service rules.
f. Continue to be eligible for the concession as determined by the competent authority.

Continuation of the fee concession shall be subject to annual evaluation based on the recommendations of:

a. Research Supervisor;
b. Research Advisory Committee (RAC); and
c. School / Departmental Research Committee, as applicable.

4. APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

a. Applications for VISTAS Research Fellowship / fee concession shall be submitted in the prescribed format along with the required supporting documents.
b. The eligibility of the applicant shall be verified by the concerned School / Department and the Research Office.
c. The selection / recommendation of candidates for financial support shall be made in accordance with the criteria and procedures approved by VISTAS.
d. The recommendation shall be placed before the competent authority for approval.
e. Fellowship / fee concession shall be effective only after formal approval and issuance of the relevant sanction / approval order.
f. VISTAS reserves the right to limit the number of fellowship awards / fee concessions based on availability of funds and institutional priorities.

5. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

All scholars receiving financial support under this Policy shall comply with VISTAS requirements relating to academic progress, research activities, attendance, reporting and other applicable Ph.D. requirements.

a. Submit periodic research progress reports as prescribed.
b. Appear before the Research Advisory Committee / appropriate review committee as required.
c. Maintain the prescribed attendance and academic requirements.
d. Comply with the directions of the Research Supervisor, Research Advisory Committee and competent academic authorities.
e. Inform VISTAS promptly regarding any change in status that may affect their eligibility for fellowship / fee concession.
f. Disclose any external fellowship / scholarship received during the period of VISTAS financial support.

6. SUSPENSION / DISCONTINUATION OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Financial support under this Policy may be suspended or discontinued, subject to due consideration by the competent authority, if the scholar:

a. Fails to maintain satisfactory academic or research progress.
b. Fails to satisfy the prescribed attendance requirements.
c. Fails to submit the required progress reports or other documents.
d. Violates VISTAS regulations, rules or code of conduct.
e. Discontinues or withdraws from the Ph.D. Programme.
f. Becomes ineligible under the applicable Ph.D. Regulations or this Policy.
g. Receives an external fellowship / scholarship that is not permitted to be held concurrently with the VISTAS Research Fellowship.
h. Provides incorrect, incomplete or misleading information in connection with the award of financial support.

Where financial support is suspended or discontinued, the effective date and other consequential matters shall be determined by the competent authority in accordance with the applicable rules.

7. RECOVERY OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

a. Where a scholar has received fellowship / financial support in violation of the conditions of this Policy, based on incorrect or suppressed information, or in circumstances specifically prescribed by VISTAS, VISTAS may recover the amount paid, subject to the decision of the competent authority and applicable institutional regulations.
b. Any recovery shall be communicated to the scholar in writing and shall specify the reason and amount of recovery, wherever applicable.

8. COMPETENT AUTHORITY

The Board of Research Studies (BORS), VISTAS, shall be the competent authority for:

a. Recommending / approving the framework for fellowship and scholarship support.
b. Approving fellowship / scholarship awards or authorising the appropriate authority for such approval.
c. Monitoring the implementation of this Policy.
d. Considering recommendations regarding continuation, suspension or discontinuation of financial support.
e. Resolving issues and disputes arising from the implementation of this Policy.
f. Interpreting the provisions of this Policy.

g. Recommending amendments / revisions to the Policy.

Wherever required, matters involving financial implications shall also be subject to the approval of the appropriate financial / administrative authority of VISTAS.

9. GENERAL PROVISIONS

a. Grant of fellowship / fee concession under this Policy shall not be construed as a guarantee of continuation for the entire duration of the Ph.D. Programme.
b. Continuation shall remain subject to satisfactory progress, compliance with VISTAS regulations and fulfilment of the conditions prescribed under this Policy.
c. The fellowship / fee concession shall be personal to the approved scholar and shall not be transferable.
d. No scholar shall be entitled to claim financial support as a matter of right
e. In case of any inconsistency between this Policy and any statutory / regulatory requirement, the applicable statutory / regulatory provision shall prevail.
f. Matters not specifically covered under this Policy shall be referred to the BORS / competent authority for appropriate decision.
g. VISTAS reserves the right to modify, amend, suspend or withdraw any provision of this Policy, subject to applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

10. POLICY REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

This Policy shall be reviewed at least once every three years, or earlier whenever required, to ensure continued alignment with:

a. UGC Regulations and guidelines;
b. Other applicable statutory requirements;
c. VISTAS Ph.D. Regulations;
d. Institutional research priorities; and
e. Changes in the VISTAS fellowship / scholarship framework.

Any amendment to this Policy shall be approved by the competent authority of VISTAS.

APPROVAL
Prepared by: Dean – Academic Research
VISTAS
Recommended by:
Board of Research Studies (BORS)
Approved by:
Executive Council, VISTAS

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