



Niti Policy Research Grant 2015

Public Policy Process

Guideline for applicants

Niti Foundation (Niti) is a Nepali non-profit organization engaged in strengthening Nepal's policy process through research, innovations, and alternatives. With local and international support, Niti promotes individual and organizational initiatives that strengthen policy engagement and ownership capacity in Nepal. Through its funding and technical assistance, Niti enables access to intellectual resources and platforms for policy discourse and contestation. Niti was established in June 2010 with initial funding from a group of policy entrepreneurs in Nepal and Open Society Institute, and institutional support and technical assistance from The Asia Foundation.

The **Niti Policy Research Grant 2015** is a step towards addressing the multidisciplinary challenges that exist in Nepal's public policy sphere. The research grant supports individuals studying or working in the policy arena to develop unconventional approaches to address public policy issues in Nepal. The research grant supports work that initiates deep conversation on these challenges and stimulates innovative solutions to break new ground in Nepal's public policy process. The research grant might also be used to identify policy problems that have remained unrecognized in the past and explore possible solutions. Niti seeks to support sharp and focused research ideas that have the potential to create high impact on Nepal's public policy discourse.

Niti Foundation takes innovation as any new program, product, idea, or initiative that profoundly changes the basic routines and authority flows or beliefs of a particular society or of a country. Successful innovations have durability and a broad impact, and lead to systemic change.

Eligibility Criteria

Individuals must fulfill the following criteria to be considered for the Research Grant:

1. Be a Nepali Citizen.
2. At least enrolled in a Master's program in any discipline (must have completed first year of the Master's degree) at the time of application; priority will be given to those with higher degrees (e.g. completed Master or PhD.).

The applicant/s that qualify for the grant will have to provide verified copies of citizenship certificate or passport and academic certificate or letter from academic institution as evidence for the above criteria.

Research Topic

Niti Foundation uses democratic policymaking framework for its activities based on Policy Diagnostic Study Report, 2012 that identified **representation** (citizens must have a way to make their problems and needs known to government officials, and a way to make demands on officials to use government to address their problems), **implementation** (once public officials pass laws and regulations, there must be systems for putting these policies into practice, or to put it another way, for translating words on paper into human actions) and **accountability** (there must be mechanisms by which officials are monitored, evaluated, and sanctioned when they have not met their responsibilities to carry out policies) as major cross cutting public policy issues in Nepal.

For the year 2015, Niti Research Grant will support research projects relating to **Urban Policy and Governance** in Nepal. The research topics can include comprehensive analysis of urban sector governance in Nepal to identify sectoral constraints or conduct analysis of sub-fields of urban development, e.g. municipal financing, urban poverty, housing, land use and transportation, urban environment, disaster management or any other related topics within urban policy and governance. The research conducted should have practical implications and the potential to strengthen public policy process in Nepal.

Research Support

One or more grants will be awarded based on available resources; nature of proposed research; and availability of supervisors. Selected recipient/s will be awarded a grant of maximum of Rs. 3,00,000 over a period of three-to-nine-months. In addition to the grant, the recipient will be provided office space and are required to give at least 60% of their time (i.e. at least 24 hours per week) at Niti Foundation during normal office hours. Researchers will have access to Niti Foundation's intellectual resources in the form of experienced supervisors and experts in their chosen fields. Continuation of the grant will depend on availability of grant and the recipient's work performance, which will be monitored regularly.

Application Requirements

1. **Cover Letter**, that clearly documents the interest of the applicant, his/her comparative advantage, the budget sought to perform the task and an explanation of why the research proposed is innovative and has potential for high impact (not more than 1 page in length).
2. **Curriculum Vitae**, with contact information (address, phone number, email) and academic, professional and other relevant history using applicant's own format (not more than 2 pages in length).
3. **Concept Note**, according to the given format

Concept note format

Please follow the guideline below for preparing your concept note. Your concept note should not exceed the word limits given below.

1. **Study title:** (No more than 15 words)
2. **Name of the researcher:**
3. **Total budget requested:** (NPR)
4. **Location/s for field research** (if part of the research):
5. **Expected timeframe** (in months): include start date and end date as well
6. **Research Problem:** Provide a clear and simple description of your research problem (maximum 250 words)
7. **Policy Context:** Describe how your research would inform specific public policy process, issue and/or reform (maximum 200 words)
8. **Literature Review:** Please restrict your review to literature most pertinent to the study (maximum 350 words). Identify papers whose methodology/model you are most likely to use/build on.
9. **Research Question:** Hypotheses or research questions to be tested or answered (maximum 150 words)
10. **Research Design:** Proposed methodology, data & analysis (maximum 350 words)

How to Apply

Applications must be submitted in **word format** using times new roman, font 12 and be single-spaced with each page consecutively numbered. Pages must have margins of not less than one

inch on all sides and be formatted in portrait style (not landscape) for all text portions. Shortlisted grant recipients will be contacted via email with further information for presentation and interview.

Submit Email: info@nitifoundation.org

Deadline: June 28, 2015

Selection Procedure and Grant Timeline

S.N.	Process	Tentative dates
1	Call for Proposal	First week of June, 2015
2	Information Session (Applicants should contact Niti Foundation for information session. If required group session will be held at Niti Foundation. Date and time will be informed to those who need information.)	Second and third week of June 2015
3	Submission of Application & Concept Note	June 28, 2015
4	Evaluation by Grant Evaluation Committee	First week of July, 2015
5	Presentation/Interview (only for shortlisted candidates)	Second week of July, 2015
6	Announcement of Results	Third week of July 2015