

Year 2016



# NIAS DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

*Rules, Regulations & Guidelines*



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES

Bengaluru, India



## **ABOUT THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME**

The PhD programme at NIAS draws on and is shaped by research pursued by the institute's faculty members. The overall orientation of the PhD programme is multidisciplinary research carried out within the broad framework of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and engineering. More specifically, faculty and student research at NIAS revolves around problem areas such as strategic studies, energy and environment policy, conservation biology, human-wildlife conflict, consciousness studies, education policy, economic development and conflict, societal inequalities, culture and heritage, complex systems etc.

The broad interdisciplinary structure of the PhD programme also reflects the institute's vision and mission laid out by the late J.R.D. Tata. As spelled out in the mission statement of NIAS, the confluence of different traditional academic disciplines of inquiry needs to be explored in the spirit of understanding the complex nature of contemporary problems facing the society. In particular, NIAS is committed to public education, civic engagement, mentoring of junior scholars, and scholarship in support of public interest and decision making.

### **History**

The PhD Programme was initiated at the Institute in 1999 with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), instituting a NIAS-MAHE Doctoral Programme. It was agreed at that time that students guided by NIAS faculty who were recognised as guides by MAHE would be allowed to register with MAHE and follow its rules for the doctoral programme. NIAS then had no financial responsibility for students because most of them worked on faculty research projects supported by grants. Under this arrangement five students registered with MAHE between 1999 and 2004 and doctoral degrees were awarded to all of them.

In 2004-05, the PhD Programme entered the second phase when it was expanded and regularised on the basis of financial support received by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Department

of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India. With the beginning of this new phase and the admission of the first coordinated batch of doctoral students on NIAS fellowships in January 2005, rules governing the PhD Programme were framed by the Institute.

## University Recognition

NIAS is currently recognised as a centre for research by University of Mysore and Manipal University. NIAS students can choose to register with either of these institutions that will award them the degree. While the requirements of University of Mysore and Manipal University are different, NIAS aims at uniformity in academic standards for all admitted students through coursework, qualifying examination, colloquium presentation, and admissions. NIAS is also exploring more institutional affiliation to provide flexibility for student registration in future.

## ADMISSION PROCEDURES

### Eligibility

Candidates who have completed/are completing a Master's / M.Phil degree in any relevant subject in humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and engineering, and with a proven academic record (minimum 55% marks) are eligible to apply. Candidates with professional degrees in medicine, law, public policy and social work are also welcome to apply. While some research and/or field experience in the concerned areas may be preferred for some of the research areas, it is not essential.

### Advertisement

The advertisement for admission to the PhD Programme is issued at least 45 days before the entrance test and interviews and will appear in the *Economic and Political Weekly* and *Current Science* around the end of March or early April. The advertisement is circulated to major universities and colleges and posted on the NIAS website. The selection process (entrance exam and interviews) takes place during the second half of **June** for the term beginning in **August**.

## Selection Procedure

All applications are circulated to the faculty members of NIAS based on areas of interest in the Institute's four Schools. A shortlist of candidates is prepared on the basis of recommendations provided by the faculty members and called to appear for the entrance test and interviews. The question paper for the national level entrance test is set by the PhD Committee to test verbal, quantitative, analytical/logical reasoning, and language proficiency of the shortlisted candidates. The test papers are graded immediately and candidates who clear the test are interviewed on the same day by the relevant School Selection Committee. Shortlisted candidates from different Schools are interviewed the following day by the Institute's Selection Committee chaired by the Director. This Committee includes representation from the Deans' Committee, Academic Head, and the PhD Committee members. The Institute Selection Committee prepares the final list of selected candidates for the PhD programme on consensus and the results are announced on the same day. Availability of competent faculty to supervise candidates and research priorities also play a significant role in the student selection process.

## Structure

The PhD Committee is appointed by the Director and responsible for all academic matters concerning the doctoral programme. It is also responsible for student welfare on campus and addressing student concerns that may arise during the course of their study at the institute. While this Committee enjoys complete autonomy in discharging its responsibilities, it also periodically consults with the Director, Institute's faculty members, students and other stakeholders to ensure smooth functioning of the programme. The PhD Committee is headed by the Chairperson and Academic Head and includes faculty representation from different Schools.

## CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS

There are four categories of doctoral students at NIAS resulting from the nature of financial support provided to students.

- I. **NIAS Fellowship Recipients:** These are students selected through the national level entrance examination and two levels of interviews and awarded NIAS fellowship to pursue their doctoral work at the institute.
- II. **Externally Funded Candidates:** These students are recipients of DST Inspire, UGC, CSIR fellowships and other sources and hence are not covered by NIAS fellowship.
- III. **Project Candidates:** These students are funded by research grants obtained by the Institute's faculty members from private and public funding sources.
- IV. **Self-funded Candidates:** These students do not receive any financial support from the institute or any external sources of funding.

NIAS will not bear any financial obligation to support externally-funded and self-funded candidates. For candidates admitted with the support of faculty projects, the concerned faculty member shall be responsible for supporting them through the completion of their dissertation research and writing. Opportunities may be available (not guaranteed) for students not receiving any financial support to work on specific projects during their course of study. However, the Institute doesn't discriminate students once admitted to the PhD programme and takes academic responsibility towards every admitted student.

**Uniform Criteria for Selection:** Irrespective of the nature of financial support, all students willing to be enrolled in the NIAS PhD programme will have to go through the same procedure of clearing a national level entrance test and two levels of interviews conducted at NIAS every year in the month of June.

**Uniform Criteria for Graduation:** Irrespective of the nature of financial support, all admitted students will have to complete the same coursework requirement, qualifying examination, proposal presentation, annual student colloquium, and others as required by the Institute and the university (Mysore/Manipal) under which the student is registered. Other rules governing the PhD Programme outlined in this document, such as formation of a Student Advisory Committee, approval of the proposal by NIAS, etc., apply to all students unless otherwise specified.

**Recognition of Guide:** Faculty members who are interested to supervise students should get recognition as a guide from Mysore and or Manipal universities. They should also offer courses tailored to specific needs of the students they intend to supervise and take equal responsibility for submission of the thesis. He/she should get approval from the School's Dean to get registered as a thesis guide and meet the requirements specified by the concerned universities.

## **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

The academic session for the Institute's PhD Programme begins in the first week of August. The first semester runs from **1<sup>st</sup> August to 15<sup>th</sup> December**, and the second semester from **10<sup>th</sup> January to 15<sup>th</sup> May**.

### **Coursework**

Students admitted to the NIAS PhD Programme should complete the mandatory courses and school-based or programme-specific courses within the first two semesters. Three courses are mandatory for every student: **Foundations Course** and a **Writing Course** offered in the first semester, and **Research Methodology Course** offered in the second semester. Apart from these courses gateway course as determined by the School/Programme with which the student is associated will also be mandatory. Students failing in these courses are required to repeat them. Students are also strongly encouraged to take a basic quantitative reasoning course from NIAS (if offered) or from the Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) platforms such as Coursera.org.

All students should have completed a minimum of **12** credits before they appear for the PhD Qualifying Examination. This examination will be held after the end of two semesters and held in the second or third week of June. Student should finish a minimum of **18** credits during their course of study. The coursework may consist of lecture-based courses, guided reading courses, and seminar style courses, and independent study courses. Students can take courses offered by any of the Schools within NIAS. They can also take courses outside of NIAS for credit with institutes such as IISc, NCBS, ATREE and CScS. Students can also take courses from MOOCs platforms and transfer the credits received. They can obtain credits for courses taken from online platforms like Coursera and others provided they furnish course completion certificates from the respective sources. Students who are planning to take a course outside NIAS (including online courses from Coursera and others) should inform the Supervisor and Academic Head in advance, and subsequently submit to the Institute the course details including duration, number of lecture hours, subject matter, etc. of in order for NIAS to assign the appropriate credits for that course. Additional courses outside the core discipline(s) may be undertaken for more credits, but cannot substitute for the core course. While the students are welcome to broaden their perspectives by taking more courses outside, they should also be reasonable in managing their course load and ensure that their performance in the institute's mandatory courses and courses required for their dissertation research do not suffer.

Faculty members supervising students should ensure adequate research training and coursework required for their dissertation research.

Course credits are allocated as follows:

One contact hour per week:	1 credit
Two contact hours per week:	2 credits
Three contact hours per week:	3 credits

The Institute strongly encourages students to confirm their choice of primary supervisor (thesis guide) to the Academic Head at the earliest but no later than the beginning of the second semester. The PhD Committee will provide initial mentoring to first year students and appoint a temporary



Student Advisory Committee (SAC) if the student is undecided on the choice of Supervisor. The main purpose of the temporary SAC is to provide guidance related to course work, qualifying examination and research ideas. The temporary SAC will be dissolved after the first semester or earlier once the student confirms their supervisor and forms the SAC in consultation with their confirmed supervisors.

The institute's faculty members offer courses in a range of sub-disciplines and specialised areas keeping in view the specific requirements of students. Courses are announced prior to the start of each semester and students register for courses with the approval of the instructor and have to submit the cards to the office. The office maintains the registration and grade cards for courses, which form the basis for the students' academic records.

## Assessment

Individual course instructors decide the best ways to evaluate student work. Grades are submitted at the end of each semester. The records of course registration and marks are maintained in the office and each student's CGPA is calculated at the end of each term. Grades are then converted to a **4-point** scale to compute the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). A minimum of **2.5 CGPA** is required in each semester to continue in the PhD Programme.

## Affiliation to a School at NIAS

All students are admitted to the Institute and not to a particular School/programme. Upon starting their course work in the first semester, however, the students are encouraged to explore possible research supervisor from among the faculty at NIAS. During the first year of the course the Academic Head serves as the advisor of students if they have not identified a supervisor.

## First Year Student Advisory Committee (SAC)

The Academic Head of the PhD Programme appoints a temporary Student Advisory Committee (SAC) for each student, which is responsible

for guiding him/her during the first year. In case the student has already decided on his/her supervisor, the SAC can be set up immediately in consultation with the Supervisor. This Committee advises the student regarding coursework, preparation for the Qualifying Exam, and other such academic matters, and is responsible for mentoring the student in general during the dissertation research. The SAC should meet with the student once every two months to assess their progress and provide appropriate guidance and advice. The PhD Committee at the request of the student or SAC members may reconstitute the SAC at any time during the course of study.

## **DURATION OF NIAS FELLOWSHIP**

The NIAS PhD Fellowship is given for a three years with possibility of extension for a year contingent upon the satisfactory progress towards completion of the thesis. During the course of the programme, there are several milestones such as qualifying examination, fellowship enhancement for third year, satisfactory GPA, registration with the university etc. Each of these stages involves a review and evaluation of student's work, approval by the supervisor and SAC. Students failing to meet these milestones will be put on probation and can risk losing their fellowship temporarily until they fulfill the expectations.

## **EXTENSION OF FELLOWSHIP BEYOND THREE YEARS**

Extension of the fellowship beyond three years may be granted on a case-by-case basis, subject to a satisfactory review of the students' progress. The criteria to get extension for the fourth year are: Completion of field work/archival research, at least complete drafts of three chapters (or about 50% of the thesis writing), an outline of thesis with description of each chapter, a detailed timeline for the 4<sup>th</sup> year, two publications (conference proceedings count) in their relevant research area and NIAS benchmarks (registration within reasonable time-frame, regularity in six monthly reports, presentation during annual student colloquia/student seminars, participation in institutional activities). The concerned Supervisor and SAC

must submit a progress report to the Doctoral Committee mentioning the justification for the extension. The student is also required to give a presentation of their work in order to be considered for the extension of fellowship. The fellowship will not be continued beyond three years without satisfactory completion of this process; nor will fellowship be paid retroactively if there is any delay from the student's or the Supervisor's side in completing these procedures. **Please note that the duration of fellowship for students who joined the Institute in August 2015 and later is four years (three years plus one year extension), and for those who joined the Institute in August 2014 and earlier is five years (four years plus one year extension).** Under no circumstances will the NIAS fellowship be extended beyond the stipulated time period. Also, the continuation and extension of fellowship is not automatic and will be determined by the students meeting requirements (coursework, qualifying exam, proposal presentation, university registration, and publications) and demonstrating making adequate progress in their dissertation research and writing.

## Terms and Conditions of Fellowship

Students cannot take any form of employment, full- or part-time, during the fellowship period. A student may however take up short-term honorary teaching or other honorary assignments with the permission of his/her Supervisor and the Academic Head, Doctoral Programme, provided the work is not done during office hours. Students receiving fellowships are required to devote a portion of their time (5 hours per week) to Institute's activities such their School or Programme to organise conferences, project work, etc.

## QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

Each student is required to take a Qualifying Examination immediately after the second semester (see Academic calendar). The Qualifying Examination consists of a general section for 20 marks, common to all students taking the Exam in a given year, and a subject-specific section of 80 marks intended to test the student's comprehensive knowledge of his or her subject area.

The paper is finalised by the Academic Head in consultation with their supervisor for the concerned student. Faculty specialising in the discipline(s) or sub-disciplines in which the student intends to work sets the questions for the subject section, and the general section by the PhD Committee. Generally, the subject specific questions are linked to the coursework that the student has completed but will also test their knowledge of those topics and the disciplinary area more broadly. The student should discuss the topics and readings for qualifying examination with her/his supervisor.

Each question (or set of questions) is evaluated by two faculty members (or outside experts, in case expertise within the NIAS faculty is insufficient for this purpose), independently of each other, and the average marks are calculated. A student who fails to reach the passing percentage (50 per cent) in the Qualifying Exam, or is found to have performed unsatisfactorily in other respects has to re-take the Qualifying Exam within six months and will be given only one chance. Passing the Qualifying Exam is a requirement for continuing in the PhD Programme.

## **Appointment of Supervisor and Student Advisory Committee (SAC)**

All PhD students should choose their thesis supervisor and primary advisor within six months of joining the Institute. Some will have clarity regarding their thesis supervisor at time of joining the Institute and can communicate this immediately to the Academic Head. Other students should communicate their decision on the choice of supervisor before the beginning of the second semester. This helps the students to have a constant mentoring source while taking the Research Methodology Course, where students develop their research proposal as part of the course. After the student passes the Qualifying Exam (held within a month after the first two semesters in June) the student should get ready for proposal presentation at NIAS and university registration at the beginning of the third semester. The Student Advisory Committee (SAC) will be set up soon after the confirmation of the choice of the Supervisor. Until then, the Academic Head and one of the members of the PhD Committee will give the student feedback on their PhD research

work. The SAC consists of Supervisor and minimum one faculty member from the Institute. Student can also take subject experts outside NIAS preferably who are residing in Bangalore. Total members of SAC should be four or five including the main supervisor.

The SAC is responsible for recommending further coursework, assessing the student's performance periodically, discussing and evaluating the research proposal, and monitoring his or her progress. The SAC is expected to meet with the student at least twice a year to assess his/her progress over the previous six months and discuss plans for the next six months, as mentioned in the Academic Calendar. About one month prior to the SAC meeting (around the end of each term), the student should submit a progress report to the SAC members, together with a plan for the next six months. The SAC should discuss this report with the student and any other relevant matters, review the student's performance in coursework and other activities undertaken during the previous period, and make appropriate suggestions and recommendations. Following the evaluation and meeting, the SAC should submit a report signed by all members, incorporating the student's report and their own assessment and recommendations, to the Academic Head, NIAS Doctoral Programme. Additional meetings of the SAC may also be called by the Supervisor, members, or student as required. Students should consult the rules of the concerned university he or she is registered and more committee members can be added pertaining to the rules.

In the case of students who have registered with Manipal University, the Institute forwards the duly signed bi-annual progress reports to the University as per their requirements. For students registered with the University of Mysore, a consolidated report is sent once a year as per their requirements. However, in all cases the evaluation process and meeting of the SAC should be carried out **twice a year** as an internal requirement of NIAS.

## **Change of School or Supervisor**

A student may change the School of affiliation in consultation with the Chairperson and Academic Head of the Doctoral Programme, their SAC,

and the Doctoral Programme Committee. Such a change should take place only in rare cases and for valid reasons, and only in the first or second year. A change of Supervisor can also take place only following a due process of consultation with the concerned faculty and the Doctoral Programme Committee.

## Thesis Proposal Presentation

After successful completion of the coursework and the Qualifier, the student in consultation with his or her Supervisor and Advisory Committee prepares a thesis proposal and presents it to the SAC for approval. Following the recommendation of the SAC, the student presents the proposal before the NIAS faculty and students. The thesis proposal must be presented at NIAS by the 1<sup>st</sup> week of July (or before) in the second year and the process towards university registration should be completed at the beginning of the **third semester**.

A two-member ad-hoc committee (not including the Supervisor) is formed for each student (one member from the School and the second from a different School) and one subject expert from outside the Institute to evaluate the written proposal and the presentation. Avoid appointing SAC member as an Adhoc Committee member. NIAS will forward the registration application to the concerned university based on the written recommendation by the Adhoc and SAC committees. If the Adhoc committee suggests any comments/improvement then the Supervisor should certify the amendments in the proposal, to the Doctoral Committee. If either is found to be unsatisfactory, the Committee recommends appropriate remedial action.

## Registration for PhD

After securing the approval of the proposal by the Institute, the student is recommended for Ph.D. registration and may submit his or her application to Mysore/Manipal from which NIAS has received recognition. As per the norms of these universities the candidate has to prepare their proposal to forward to the universities. The registration process is completed through the Academic Head of the Doctoral Programme.

## Progress Reports

Every six months the student must submit a progress report to his or her Advisory Committee, which then meets to evaluate the progress of the student and sends its evaluation report to the Doctoral Committee on the performance and progress of the student. These reports are forwarded by the Institute to the concerned Universities as per their rules. The report should cover courses taken and their grades, dates on which various requirements have been completed, and general overview of progress on research work including substantive points in the case of advanced students. It should also include a work plan for the next six months. The report should be comprehensive, amounting to 8-10 pages. It should be signed by the Supervisor and SAC members. Digital signature of the SAC members will be allowed only if they are out of Bangalore. If student is using digital signature an email/letter of approval from the concerned SAC member should be attached to the progress report. (normally digital signatures are not allowed).

## Colloquium

Every December, the NIAS annual student colloquium will be organised in which students present their work to the larger NIAS community. It is mandatory to all the students. The annual colloquium is considered to be a part of the review process of the doctoral scholars. NIAS faculty members and SAC members will be in attendance at the colloquium.

## SUBMISSION OF THESIS

As indicated in the Academic Calendar, the submission of the thesis should take place within **four** years after joining the programme. At the end of third year students are expected to have written at least 50% of the thesis besides two publications (journal article and/conference proceedings). Students and their Supervisors are expected to make every effort to meet this schedule. If at the end of four years the student is not ready to submit, an evaluation of progress is carried out by the SAC to determine the likely date of submission. Applications for extension of fellowship for the fourth year will be made after evaluation by the PhD Committee concerning progress of the candidate and meeting the expected deliverables. Fellowship will not be extended beyond four years.

The following procedure for submission of the thesis to NIAS for approval and forwarding to the University of registration should be followed:

1. When the final draft of the dissertation is nearly ready, the student will give a Final Colloquium at NIAS in which s/he presents the results of the thesis. The colloquium is open to the NIAS community and interested outsiders. Members of the SAC should be present. If the student and Supervisor think that the thesis will benefit from inputs by particular experts, they may also be invited. The student may incorporate comments and suggestions received during the colloquium in the final draft, but this is not compulsory. This colloquium does not constitute a review or evaluation process, but it is **mandatory**.
2. The final draft of the thesis should be submitted to the members of the SAC and discussed in a SAC meeting. Suggested changes from SAC members should be incorporated in consultation with the Supervisor.
3. Following the approval by SAC, the Supervisor should submit a letter to the Institute stating that the thesis is complete and ready for submission to the University. The letter should include signatures of all the SAC members.
4. Upon the receipt of this letter and the required number of thesis copies, ready in all respects in conformance with University guidelines and duly signed by the Supervisor, and other required documents, NIAS forwards the thesis to the University at which the student is registered for further processing, along with a letter stating that the thesis has been approved by NIAS and the student has met all the NIAS requirements for completion of the Ph.D. degree. Provision of this letter will be contingent on completion of all requirements, including coursework credits, maintaining the required CGPA, etc. Students should consult the respective University guidelines for details on their requirements. The student should submit, in addition to the number of copies required by the University, two additional copies – one for the NIAS Library and one for office records. Separate copies should be supplied to the Supervisor and SAC members (if so requested).



Following the submission process, the rules of the concerned University governing examination of the thesis are followed.

## **EXIT POLICY**

The NIAS Doctoral Programme offers generous fellowships to students to pursue their research for four years. NIAS students are expected to work full-time on their research projects and are not allowed to take up any other employment or assignment during this period. They are expected to complete their work and submit the final draft of the dissertation to NIAS for approval within the stipulated time period. Once the final draft has been submitted to the Institute and approved according to the rules laid down, it is forwarded to the concerned University for examination.

The submission of the thesis to NIAS (not to the University) represents the end point of the student's formal association with NIAS. However, NIAS will help to complete the necessary procedures prescribed by the University, including conducting the viva and other such matters, until the doctorate is awarded.

As a matter of general principle, the dissertation should be submitted to the Institute before a student leaves to take up a job or other assignment. However, there may be cases where a job offer becomes available before the dissertation is complete and it would be detrimental to the student's future career prospects to turn it down. In such cases, the student should first seek the help of the Institute in extending the joining date to enable him/her to complete the dissertation first. If this effort fails, s/he should apply to the Institute for special permission to take up the job and leave the Doctoral Programme before completion. This application must be supported by a letter from the Supervisor, endorsed by the Student Advisory Committee members, explaining the extent of progress made, the amount of work remaining, and likely date of completion. The letter should state realistically the expected date of submission, taking into consideration the other responsibilities that the student would be taking up. The student must also give an undertaking in writing that he/she would submit the dissertation by the projected date. The projected date of submission should not be more than *six months* from the date of leaving the Institute.

The PhD Committee will review the application, discuss the matter with the student and his/her Supervisor, and make a recommendation to the Director, who takes the final decision. Under no circumstances should a student drawing NIAS fellowship join a job or assignment without explicit written permission from the Institute.

The same procedure should be followed in the case of a student who has completed four years on the fellowship programme and has not finished the dissertation. Since the fellowship cannot be extended beyond four years and the student may take up a job in the interim, he/she should furnish a letter stating the expected date of completion, supported by a letter from the Supervisor and the SAC.

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS (ADMINISTRATION)**

### **Identity Card**

For all Students an identity card & a library card will be issued. The identity card & the library cards are the valid pass to avail the facilities at the Institute. The identity card may be obtained from the Head-Administration by filling a prescribed form available in the office. The library card can be obtained from the Library & Information Officer. The applications for the said cards required 2 +1 stamp size colour photographs. Without an identity card, students will not be given access to the campus. Loss of the identity card should be reported in writing to the nearest police station and acknowledgement obtained immediately. In addition the Head Administration should be informed. After getting Doctoral Degree, student shall return the identity card and no due certificate from the library to the office.

### **Bonafide Certificate**

If you need any bonafide certificate or residential proof certificate for obtaining passport/ Visa /Opening a bank account/ obtaining a cell phone connections etc. please contact the Head-Administration. Please send your request to [admin@nias.iisc.ernet.in](mailto:admin@nias.iisc.ernet.in)

## An undertaking to be given by the student at the time of admission

Following admission the student is required to sign a statement undertaking that:

- ❖ He or she will abide by the rules of the Institute;
- ❖ He or she will complete his or her studies in the Institute; and
- ❖ If for any legitimate reasons, he or she is forced to discontinue his or her studies, he or she will do so only on prior intimation to and permission from the Chairman and Academic Head of the Doctoral Programme and the Director.

## Accommodation

Institute has limited hostel accommodation for out station female students. Students may approach the Institute in writing, if they are interested for the same. Allotment will be subject to availability and the decision of the Institute will be final. Detailed terms and conditions will be made known through the allotment letter.

## Attendance

Students are required to attend lectures, coursework, seminars, etc., relating to the courses and should not be absent without adequate reasons and prior permission. In addition, students are also required to attend the NIAS Wednesday Discussion Meetings, Student Colloquia and Associates programmes. Students who have not received permission to be away on work or personal leave are expected to be on campus during the regular working hours. **80% attendance to the Institute is mandatory.**

## University Fee

NIAS is affiliated to Manipal and Mysore University. All fees payable to the University by students concerning their PhD course will have to be borne and remitted directly by the Students.

## Student Activities

During their stay at the Institute, students are expected to take an active part in the academic life of the Institute such as Wednesday Discussion Meeting and other seminars, meetings, and conferences.

A student undertaking research or coursework is eligible for:

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. Personal Leave  | 30 days per year                                      |
| 2. Medical Leave   | 30 days per year (extended sickness, hospitalisation) |
| 3. Maternity Leave | 90 days with scholarship once during studentship      |
| 4. Winter Break    | 15 to 31 December                                     |

Students permitted to attend approved conferences or to be away from NIAS on other work related to his or her coursework or research work (such as for field visits or library work) shall be considered to be on duty. In such cases, the student must submit a letter, signed by the Supervisor through the Academic Head, stating the period of absence and the reasons thereof to the Head-Administration. To avail of leave of absence on personal grounds or to be absent from NIAS on duty, students should send a letter or mail in advance to the Head, Administration, through his/her Supervisor to the Academic Head, stating their approval. On failure to get the leave duly approved, the period will be treated as **‘UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE’** and proportionate deductions will be made from the fellowship.

Medical leave for periods of less than seven days is not permitted. To obtain leave under serial numbers 2 and 3 above, a Medical Certificate and subsequent Fitness Certificate (for resumption of studies) are required. These documents are to be secured from competent medical authorities. Combination of different types of leave is not normally permitted. No carry-over of leave is permitted. Unused leave under serial number 1 and 2 above shall automatically lapse at the end of the year. For all purposes of grant of leave, the year is reckoned from the date of joining. **Leave taken in excess of the permissible limit will generally be treated as unpaid leave.**

A student who is planning to be away from NIAS for an extended period on research fieldwork or other work related to his/her course of study should inform the Institute in advance and in writing, through the Supervisor and the Academic Head, detailing the period of absence and the reasons thereof. No leave can be carried over.

## Travel Grant and Contingency

Students (who are well advanced in their research) are encouraged to participate in international conferences in their areas of research. Towards this, the Institute will provide a financial support of not exceeding Rs. 50,000/- (or actual, whichever is less) & this can be availed only once after the completion of first year and before the completion of fourth year.

Contingency facilities are available to each research scholar as per the rules of the Institute. The grant can be utilized for buying books, attending national conferences (one per year from the second year onwards), fieldwork, Xerox, printing and binding of thesis and other research/educational activities. The books can be purchased from outside, only if it is not available in the Institute library and the same should be accessioned by the Institute library before claiming for reimbursement. Current entitlement of travel and reimbursement of other expenses in connection with the fieldwork and participation in national conference/seminars are as under: -

Travel Entitlements – out station	First Class/AC III Tier/AC Chair Car
Accommodation, local travel within the city, Food	Reimbursement of Hotel Accommodation/guest house of up-to Rs.750/= per day; Reimbursement of local travel expenses (Bus/Auto) up-to Rs.150 per day for travel with in the City & Reimbursement of Food bills not exceeding Rs.225/= per day. (while on outstation)

Travel support for participating in an International and National Seminar/Conference will be given only if the Student is making a paper or poster

presentation. Students must apply in advance and obtain the approval for utilising the contingency grant through the Supervisor and the Academic Head to the Head- Administration with a detailed estimate of amount required. Grant of contingency funds is at the discretion of the Director. All claims should be submitted to the office within fifteen days of incurring the same.

## **Sports Facilities**

Facilities for playing table tennis (TT), indoor badminton and carom are available. The TT table and badminton facilities are available at the Atrium of Faculty Block.

## **Medical Insurance**

Students are covered under the Janata Mediclaim Policy of the New India Assurance Company with an individual coverage of Rs.75000/= per annum from the 1<sup>st</sup> of November of the year in which they join NIAS till the end of fellowship period. More details can be obtained from the office.

## **Canteen**

Students can avail of the NIAS canteen facility for lunch on working days, on monthly payment basis. The coffee/Tea will be served in the morning from 10-10:30 am and afternoon 3 - 3:30 pm. Only on Wednesdays it will be served after the Wednesday Lecture. The students going on long periods of leave or fieldwork should inform the canteen in-charge in advance.

## **NIAS Library**

NIAS library has a well-balanced collection of books across disciplines in which our faculty and students are actively engaged in research. The collection is liberal in scope but selective in titles with an emphasis on acquisition relevant to interdisciplinary research, doctoral programme and courses conducted by the Institute.

## **Collection**

The Library collection includes books, journals, bound volumes of journals, doctoral theses, magazines, newspapers as well as audio-visual resources. Electronic subscriptions include e-journals and databases. The library also acquires Census and NSSO data in electronic form on a regular basis.

## **Membership and Borrowing Privileges**

Students should submit Library registration form along with a soft copy of their photograph for obtaining the Library ID card.

- Students are eligible to borrow 10 books
- Loan period is one month
- One renewal for a period of one month is permitted (unless the book is reserved)
- Books have to be physically brought to the Library for renewal
- Borrowing privileges not transferable
- Reference books and loose issues of journals do not circulate

## **Recommending Library Resources**

Students are encouraged to recommend relevant Library resources including books and journals with the permission from their respective thesis advisors.

## **New Books Alert Service**

Monthly list of new additions is sent to all faculty and students and posted on the Library website. Book arrival notice of recommended books is sent to the concerned user.

## **Library Website**

Library website provides access to online catalogue of Library resources. Current journal subscriptions are listed alphabetically on the website and

are accessible within the campus as well as remotely via Athens. Athens credentials will be provided to students for off campus access.

## **Photocopy Service**

Photocopy, printing and scanning facilities are available in the Library. Materials can be photocopied subject to copyright restrictions. Printing articles from licensed content is restricted to NIAS community.

## **Inter-library Loan Services**

Library offers inter-library loan services to students. On request, document delivery services are also provided.

## **Thesis Submission**

Students should deposit the thesis to the Library in the following formats.

1. One hardcopy of the accepted version of the thesis
2. Soft copy of the accepted version (single PDF)
3. Chapter-wise soft copies of the accepted version in PDF

## **Academic Infractions**

Plagiarism and other academic infractions are seriously viewed and lead up to expulsion from the institute and termination of fellowship. While proposals and thesis submission is run through anti-plagiarism software, we expect the students to adhere to the same standards for assignments in courses irrespective of the weights of the assignment.



# NIAS RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

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## PREFACE

A research ethics statement or protocol is an essential part of every proposal for research involving human and/or animal subjects, and must be submitted to the NIAS Ethics Committee for review and approval. This document contains the Principles and Guidelines on Research Ethics adopted by NIAS.

Section 1 outlines the ethical principles that should guide research involving human subjects, in controlled as well as ‘natural’ settings. Section 2 lists ethical guidelines for research with animals in the field and in captivity. Section 3 concerns the responsibilities of researchers to the public and to the research community, and explains various kinds of research misconduct. Section 4 outlines the current procedures for obtaining Ethics Clearance for a research proposal at NIAS.

Given the complexity and diversity of research projects and contexts, the principles and guidelines outlined below are meant to help researchers to maintain an ethical framework for their research, rather than to operate as a rigid set of rules. As it is not possible to develop guidelines or procedures that would apply to every possible research setting, researchers are urged to consult the research ethics policies and sample protocols developed by professional bodies or relevant institutions in their own areas of research, and to tailor their protocols to address whatever ethical issues may arise due to the objectives and methods of their particular projects. Each section provides references to resources for further information.

## SECTION 1

# ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH WITH HUMAN SUBJECTS

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### 1.1. **Respect for the autonomy, rights and dignity of participants:**

In conducting research, disseminating results, or performing other professional activities, researchers must ensure that they do not harm the safety, dignity, or privacy of the people with whom they work, or those who might reasonably be thought to be affected by their research. The autonomy and rights of participants must be respected and protected.

1.1.1. Participation in the research process must be voluntary, and based on informed consent and a non-exploitative research relationship.

1.1.2. Participants must be informed that they may withdraw from a research project at any time.

### 1.2. **Protection of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of subjects:**

The privacy of subjects must be ensured and protected. Information about participants and information provided by them, including information obtained indirectly, must be kept confidential. Subjects' permission is needed to share such information, and their anonymity must be maintained unless specifically requested otherwise.

1.2.1. In fieldwork situations in particular, the researcher should determine in advance whether their providers of information wish to remain anonymous or be recognised, and make every effort to comply with those wishes.

1.2.2. Potential subjects should be informed about the measures taken to ensure the anonymity, confidentiality, and security of all types of data collected (digital, visual, material, etc).

**1.3. Risk minimisation:** Adequate precautions should be taken to minimise risk and protect the well-being of participants. The researcher has a duty to maximise benefits and minimise risks to human subjects.

1.3.1. Techniques used as part of methodology need to be examined with regard to social risks.

1.3.2. Research, whether experimental or observational, should always be carried out with respect for the dignity of the individuals, for their beliefs, for their privacy, especially in situations involving special groups such as the young, the old, accident victims, the ill or prisoners.

1.3.3. Compensation for the time and efforts of the participants could also be considered, where appropriate.

**1.4. Professional responsibility:** A researcher must be both responsible and socially accountable. To avoid confusion and conflicts of interests, professional boundaries of competence should not be crossed, especially in the context of multidisciplinary research where the boundaries may be unclear.

1.4.1. Researchers must maintain professional boundaries *vis-à-vis* research subjects.

1.4.2. Researchers should be sensitive to the gender and socio-cultural nuances during interaction with human participants, and conduct themselves with personal integrity.

1.4.3. Researchers must make good-faith efforts to identify potential ethical claims and conflicts in advance when preparing proposals and as projects proceed.

**1.5. Informed consent:** Prior oral or written informed consent should be taken; special care needs to be exercised with regard to oral consent.

- 1.5.1. Researchers have a responsibility to be both honest and transparent with all stakeholders about the nature and intent of their research. They must not deceive the people they are studying with regard to their research goals, funding sources, activities, methods, findings, or expected impacts of their work.
- 1.5.2. Standard research ethics protocols for clinical, experimental and survey settings require advance informed consent of subjects in writing, in which the subject signs a consent form which details the objectives and methods to be employed in the research project, the nature of their participation, and possible negative effects.
- 1.5.3. In fieldwork situations where obtaining signatures on consent forms is difficult or impossible, oral consent may be obtained through other methods. For example:
  - 1.5.3.1. Make participants aware of your presence and the purpose of the research whenever possible.
  - 1.5.3.2. Discuss with potential research subjects how participation in the study may affect them.
  - 1.5.3.3. Take permission from participants to record interviews or interactions (including note-taking, audio, video, and photographic recording).
  - 1.5.3.4. Engage in an ongoing discussion with collaborators or human subjects during fieldwork, about the nature of study participation, its risks and potential benefits.
  - 1.5.3.5. When observing public events or in other contexts where the researcher is not known to outside participants, the researcher should take all practicable steps to be introduced by local participants and be identified as a researcher. However, not everyone observed or photographed will be known to the

researcher. Studies of large-scale events should be guided by standard ethical considerations, such as protecting the privacy and dignity of participants and risk minimisation.

**1.6. Recording, storing and managing data and publication of results:** The protection of human subjects requires that data be used, stored, and disclosed in a way that ensures the privacy of individual research subjects.

1.6.1. All original research records, notes, recordings, and other material collected must be protected from unauthorised access by others. Researchers must ensure that nothing that they publish or otherwise make public would permit identification of individuals that would put their welfare or security at risk.

1.6.2. In publishing or otherwise disseminating their research results, researchers must ensure that the safety, dignity, and privacy of their research subjects are not compromised.

## References and resources:

Ethical Guidelines for Good Research Practice. Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and the Commonwealth (ASA), 2011. Available at: <http://www.theasa.org/downloads/ASA%20ethics%20guidelines%202011.pdf>

Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association, February 2009. Available at: <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>

Ethical Guidelines for Social Science Research in Health. National Committee for Ethics in Social Science Research I Health CEHAT (Centre for Inquiry into Health and Allied Themes), Mumbai, 2004. Available at: <http://www.cehat.org/go/uploads/EthicalGuidelines/ethicalguidelines.pdf>

Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical Research on Human Participants. Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi, 2006. Available at: [http://icmr.nic.in/ethical\\_guidelines.pdf](http://icmr.nic.in/ethical_guidelines.pdf)

Ethics and Code of Conduct of Clinical Psychologists. Guidelines 2012-2013. Indian Association of Clinical Psychologists, 2014. Available at: <http://www.iacp.in/node/159>

## SECTION 2

# ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH ON ANIMALS IN THE FIELD AND IN CAPTIVITY

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- 2.1. The investigator should first address some basic concerns before conducting behavioural research on animals, namely:
  - 2.1.1. Does the purpose of the research justify the use of animals?
  - 2.1.2. What criteria must be met for the observations or experiments to be acceptable?
  - 2.1.3. Is the extent of pain/distress/suffering that the animal may experience acceptable?
- 2.2. Three fundamental concepts for improving the welfare of animals used for scientific research are known as the 'Three Rs':
  - 2.2.1. *Replacement* of animals with other methods; 2.2.2. *Reduction* of number of animals used; and
  - 2.2.3. *Refinement* of techniques used to reduce the impact on animals.
- 2.3. Using animals for scientific purposes is only acceptable when the physical or psychological harm done to animals is outweighed by the benefits of the research to humans and other species, as can be potentially justified by the researcher to the maximum extent possible.
- 2.4. When a species is chosen for research, two main '-isms' must be avoided as far as practicable:
  - 2.4.1. Sizeism, where smaller species are judged as less capable of suffering; and

- 2.4.2. Speciesism, where some species are thought to be less capable of experiencing suffering because we find their appearance or behaviour unattractive, or because, in the wild, they are a pest species or live in an environment we consider undesirable.
- 2.5. Pain, distress or suffering to animals during the course of research should be minimised both in duration and magnitude to the greatest possible extent.
- 2.6. Investigators should consider the quantity and quality of space and care, which they provide for their animals, and remain appraised of best practices in the current relevant literature.
- 2.7. Wherever possible, non-invasive methods of biological sample collection should be used. Mutilatory forms of identification (e.g., toe-amputation), or those which injure substantial amounts of tissue should be assumed to cause substantial acute and perhaps chronic pain, and should generally be avoided.
- 2.8. Even when study methods are non-invasive, human presence can have a considerable effect on the behaviour of animals, ranging from causing stress in the study species to the transmission of diseases to the animals. Hence, investigators must be always try and minimise their intrusion in animal habitats.

## References and resources:

- Sherwin, C.M., et al. (2003). Guidelines for the ethical use of animals in applied animal behaviour research. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science* 81: 291-305.
- Cuthill, I. (1991). Field experiments in animal behaviour: methods and ethics. *Animal Behaviour* 42: 1007-1014.
- Kirkwood, J.K. and Sainsbury, A.W. (1996). Ethics of interventions for the welfare of free-living wild animals. *Animal Welfare* 5: 235-243.
- MacClancy, J. and Fuentes, A. (2013). *Ethics in the Field: Contemporary Challenges*. Berghahn Press, New York.

## SECTION 3

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCHERS TO THE PUBLIC AND RESEARCH COMMUNITY

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The credibility of the scientific enterprise with the public and with the academic community depends on the maintenance of the highest ethical standards in research. This section discusses general principles regarding ownership and sharing of data and research results, authorship, giving due attribution and acknowledgements, and scientific misconduct.

**3.1. Sharing of research results:** Every investigator has an obligation to the general scientific community to cooperate to publish and share research findings and data with others. Publication of research results is important as a means of communicating to the scholarly world so that readers may be informed of research results and other researchers may build on the reported findings. However, the following cautionary remarks apply:

- 3.1.1. Researchers – especially those working with human subjects – have an ethical obligation to consider the potential impact of the communication, publication, or dissemination of their research results on all directly or indirectly involved.
- 3.1.2. Results of research should be made public and shared with participants and the research community in an appropriate manner, subject to the ethical commitment to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of research participants.
- 3.1.3. Researchers should not withhold research results from research participants when those results are shared with others.
- 3.1.4. Publicly funded research should be open to review by the academic community and the public, subject to the requirement of protecting the privacy of subjects.



**3.2. Research misconduct:** Research misconduct is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism, including misrepresentation of credentials, in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.

3.2.1. It is a primary responsibility of a researcher or writer to avoid either a false statement or an omission that distorts the research record. Any intentional or reckless disregard for the truth in reporting observations may be considered to be an act of research misconduct.

3.2.2. False or deceptive public statements about one's research must be avoided.

3.2.3. Reporting suspected research misconduct is a shared and serious responsibility of all members of the academic community. All reports are treated confidentially to the extent possible, and no adverse action will be taken, either directly or indirectly, against a person who makes such an allegation in good faith.

3.2.4. It is unethical to release to the media scientific information contained in an accepted manuscript prior to the publication.

**3.3. Authorship:**

3.3.1. As defined by ICMJE\*, authorship of a research publication is based on the following four criteria:

3.3.1.1. Substantial contribution to the conception or design of the work; or to the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of the data for the work, AND

3.3.1.2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND

3.3.1.3. Final approval of the version to be published; AND

3.3.1.4. Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

3.3.2. If more than one person contributes significantly to the work, the decision of which names are to be listed as co-authors should reflect the relative contributions of various participants in the research and in the writing for the publication. A person whose contribution merits co-authorship should be named even in oral presentations, especially when abstracts or transactions of the proceedings of a conference at which a paper is presented, is published. Those who do not meet these four criteria should only be acknowledged. These criteria are intended to reserve the status of authorship for those who deserve the credit and can take responsibility for the work.

3.3.3. Both 'ghost' authorship and 'guest' authorship should be avoided. Ghost/guest authorship occurs when an individual makes/does not make a substantial contribution to the research OR to the writing of the paper, but is not listed/listed as an author.

**3.4. Acknowledgements, due credit, and plagiarism:** The work of others should be cited or credited, whether published or unpublished and whether it is written work, an oral presentation, or material on a website. Authors who present the words, data, material, or ideas of others with the implication that they are their own, without attribution in a form appropriate for the medium of presentation, may be guilty of *plagiarism* and/or *research misconduct*.

3.4.1. The same definition of plagiarism applies to an application or proposal, including background and methodological sections, as to a publication.

- 3.4.2. A biographical sketch incorporated into a proposal or a curriculum vitae used in an application for a fellowship or any other position must follow the same standards of accuracy as a research publication.
- 3.4.3. The same rules apply to student papers submitted for academic credit.
- 3.5. **Maintenance of records and data:** In order to preserve accurate documentation of observed facts with which later reports or conclusions can be compared, every researcher has an obligation to maintain a clear and complete record of data acquired.
  - 3.5.1. The intentional destruction of research records or the failure to maintain and produce research records supporting a questioned research publication or report may be considered to be circumstantial evidence of research misconduct.
  - 3.5.2. In some disciplines, such as anthropology, field notes are viewed as the product of the researcher rather than as data, and are customarily not made available to others for ethical reasons. To the contrary, they must be stored carefully to protect the privacy and confidentiality of subjects.

## References and resources:

\*Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals, International Council of Medical Journal Editors, 2014. Available at: <http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>

Guidelines for Responsible Conduct of Research, Office of Research Integrity, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, 2011. Available at: <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/documents/GUIDELINES%20FOR%20ETHICAL%20PRACTICES%20IN%20RESEARCH-FINAL.revised2-March%202011.pdf>

**SECTION 4:**  
**PROCEDURE TO OBTAIN**  
**ETHICS PROTOCOL CLEARANCE**

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- 4.1. All research proposals that include work with animal and/or human subjects must include an ethics statement, based on the above guidelines and standard ethical principles in the researcher's discipline or area of research. The ethics protocol should refer to the methodology section of the proposal and address all the relevant points outlined above, e.g., how informed consent will be obtained, how confidentiality will be assured and data protected, how the well-being of animals will be ensured, and so on.
- 4.2. The proposal together with the ethics statement and originality report should be submitted by email to the Chair of the NIAS Research Ethics Committee, with a request for review.
- 4.3. Doctoral students or Principal Investigators of proposed projects will meet with the Committee to present and discuss their ethics protocols and any issues of concern with regard to maintaining research ethics.
- 4.4. In the case of doctoral students, the review process and approval by the Committee must take place before the students present their proposal to the Institute for approval. Students must also first submit the draft research proposal to the NIAS Library for a plagiarism check, and the originality report included with the proposal. Duplicate content (excluding the reference list) should not exceed the maximum specified by the university or funding agency to which the proposal is being submitted. Supervisors are welcome to attend the meeting of the committee with their doctoral students.
- 4.5. If the Committee has suggested specific changes, the revised protocol may be re-submitted by email. When the protocol is found to be satisfactory, an ethics clearance letter signed by the

Committee members will be issued to the concerned Principal Investigator or student.

- 4.6. The Committee shall meet two to three times a year to review proposals, on dates to be notified well in advance. Applicants should submit their proposals at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting with a request to be included in the scheduled review process. Three out of four members should be present at the review meeting for clearance to be issued. If a Principal Investigator or doctoral student urgently requires ethics clearance due to unforeseen reasons, an extraordinary meeting may be requested.

## ACADEMIC CALENDAR & EXPECTATIONS

(Academic Session is from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> July)

Entrance Exam and Interviews June	Admission of students to the NIAS Doctoral Programme
<b><u>1<sup>st</sup> Year</u></b>	
❖ 1 <sup>st</sup> August to 15 <sup>th</sup> December (1 <sup>st</sup> Semester)	Course work amounting to at least six credits
❖ 15 <sup>th</sup> December to 31 <sup>st</sup> December	Winter break
❖ January to 30 <sup>th</sup> April (2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester)	Course work amounting to at least six credits
❖ June	Choose Supervisor by beginning of 3 <sup>rd</sup> semester
❖ July	Qualifying Examination  Appointment of Student Advisory Committee (SAC) & Presentation of thesis proposal at NIAS
<b><u>2<sup>nd</sup> Year</u></b>	
❖ August	Application for Ph.D registration to University  Ph.D registration process
❖ December	Annual Assessment and Second Year Review by Doctoral Programme Committee

<u>3<sup>rd</sup> Year</u>	
❖ August	Enhancement of fellowship subject to successful completion of all requirements up to the end of the second year
❖ December	Student Colloquium on work in progress
❖ January	Bi-annual assessment by SAC
❖ July	Bi-annual assessment by SAC  Annual Assessment and Third Year Review by Doctoral Committee  Application for extension of fellowship if needed; student colloquium and evaluation
<u>4<sup>th</sup> Year</u>	
❖ November to December	Student Colloquium on work in progress
❖ January	Bi-annual assessment by SAC
❖ July	Final Student Colloquium (last date)
❖ 31 <sup>st</sup> July	Last date of thesis submission











