Standard Operating Procedures

National Scholarship Portal (NSP)

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Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
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Power To Empower

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
AISHE	All India Survey on Higher Education
DBT	Direct Benefit Transfer
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
MeitY	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
MMP	Mission Mode Project
NCVT	National Council for Vocational Training
SCVT	State Council for Vocational Training
NIC	National Informatics Centre
NSP	National Scholarship Portal
NUEPA	National University for Education Planning and Administration
OTP	One Time Password (delivered on mobile)
PFMS	Public Financial Management System
PMU	Project Management Unit
SMART	Simplified, Mission-oriented, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent
U-DISE	Unified District Information System for Education

1. National Scholarship Portal Overview

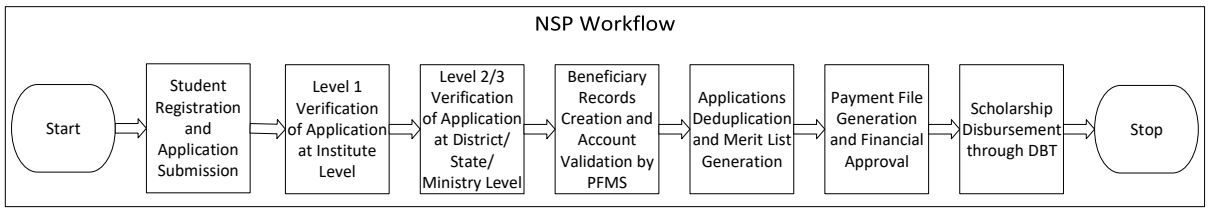
NSP is one-stop solution through which various services starting from student application, application receipt, verification, processing, and disbursal of various scholarships to students are facilitated. National Scholarship Portal is taken as Mission Mode Project (MMP) under Digital India. This initiative aims at providing a Simplified, Mission-oriented, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent 'SMART' System for faster and effective disbursal of Scholarship to eligible applicants directly into their account through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) without any leakages.

2. Purpose of the Document

This document defines Roles and Responsibilities of all users of NSP, and briefly conveys the high-level processes involved while operating NSP.

3. Overall NSP Workflow

The overall workflow for NSP is as below:



The steps involved in NSP are as follows:

- Step-1: Student Registration and Application Submission
- Step-2: Level 1 Verification of Application at Institute Level
- Step-3: Level 2/3 Verification of Application at District/State/Ministry Level
- Step-4: Beneficiary Records Creation and Account Validation by PFMS
- Step-5: Applications Deduplication and Merit List Generation
- Step-6: Payment File Generation and Financial Approval
- Step-7: Scholarship Disbursement through DBT

Kindly refer User manual(s) for steps involved at each of the above steps.

4. Users of NSP and their Roles and Responsibilities

This section enlists the essential users of NSP, and enumerates their brief roles and responsibilities.

4.1. Users of NSP

The primary users of NSP are as under:

a) Student / Applicant
b) Institute Nodal Officer
c) District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer
d) Scheme owner Ministries / Departments / Other Govt. bodies
e) Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology
f) Direct Benefit Transfer(DBT) Mission, Cabinet Secretariat
g) National Informatics Center (NIC)
h) Help Desk

4.2. Roles & Responsibilities

The user-wise Roles & Responsibilities are as per the subsections below:

4.2.1. Student/ Applicant

The primary role of the Student/ Applicant is to register and submit the application at NSP. The student/applicant who is applying for the first time on NSP portal, is referred to as Fresh Students, and the students who have been granted scholarship in any of the scheme on-boarded at NSP in the immediately preceding Academic Year, are referred to as Renewal students. The student/applicant using the NSP must adhere to the following:

1. **Registration Process for Fresh Students:**
   a) Students applying for scholarship for the first time need to **"Register"** on the portal as fresh applicant, using the icon "New Registration" at NSP Portal URL - https://scholarships.gov.in/, by providing accurate and correct information as per their documents.
   b) Before initiating registration process, students are advised to carefully go through the "Guidelines for Registration on National Scholarship Portal" and keep their

Educational and other documents such as Aadhaar number, Enrolment number, Bank passbook etc. in hand.

c) Fields marked as '*' are mandatory.

d) Students who have been assigned Aadhaar shall mandatorily provide their Aadhaar number in their application.

e) Student(s)/The Student who do not possess Aadhaar shall provide the enrolment ID (if available), and upload scanned copy Bank Passbook with Photograph, in PDF or JPEG format (Maximum size 200 KB). The student will also be required to upload bonafide student certificate from Institute / School in along with their application form.

f) Upon submitting all the details on registration page, student will get a unique application ID and password through SMS on the provided(registered) mobile number.

g) The student shall login to NSP using application ID and password received. The student must change the password upon first login. This password has to be kept safely and confidentially. The student can change the mobile number only before the first login, i.e. before changing the received password.

h) The student can apply in any of the scheme on-boarded on NSP by providing accurate and correct information as per their documents, and shall submit the documents to the Institute after Final submission of the application at NSP portal.

i) The detailed procedure for filling the application form has been provided in the User Manual for Applicants.

2. <u>Process for Renewal Students:</u>

a) Renewal Students are the students who have been granted scholarship in any of the scheme on-boarded at NSP, in the immediately preceding Academic Year.

b) Renewal Students can only apply for renewal of scholarship in the same scheme, for which they have been granted scholarship in the previous Academic Year. Student is required to update their marks obtained in previous year and submit the application on NSP Portal. The student must keep the account in which scholarship was received in previous year as active (i.e. non-dormant) and functional to receive scholarship amount.

c) In case the student wish to apply for any other scheme, he/she must login using their previous year's application ID and password, select the option for withdrawing the

renewal application, and then register as a Fresh Student in the current Academic Year. Thereafter, they shall follow the process for Fresh Application.

3. Precautions to be taken

a) The student/applicant must ensure that the Bank Account details (A/c Number, IFSC Code) submitted is correct and keep the account active (i.e. non-dormant) and functional to receive scholarship amount (i.e. Any condition imposed on accounts by bank, like seeding of AADHAAR, any limit on receiving credit in accounts etc., which may hamper scholarship credit in account should be complied with).

b) The student/applicant must ensure that the resolution/quality of documents uploaded is adequate so that they are clear and readable.

c) The student/applicant must ensure that the mobile number provided in the application is correct and belongs to the student/ applicant.

d) The student/applicant must select the desired scheme from list of schemes available as per the eligibility criteria of the scheme(s).

e) The student/applicant must take timely action(s) on the SMS received from NSP.

f) The student/applicant must follow up with Institutes for application verification before the deadlines.

g) The student/applicant must rectify the error(s) and comply with the remarks made in the application in case the application is marked as defective in NSP.

h) The student/applicant shall note that applications marked rejected / fake by the nodal officer during the verification / reverification process will not be considered for further processing on NSP.

i) The student/applicant must carefully select their institute. If applicant selects some other institute by mistake, he or she will have to get their application marked defected from the selected institute and then Institute can be corrected.

j) The student/applicant shall note that priority for Scholarship Disbursement will be given to the Aadhaar seeded bank accounts.

k) The student/applicant shall note that NSP provides only one chance for updating bank account details (only in case when bank accounts details are not validated by PFMS). Applicants should be cautious to exercise this option, failing which the application will not be considered for scholarship.

4.2.2. Institute Nodal Officer

The primary role of the Institute Nodal officer is 1st Level verification of the applications submitted by applicants at NSP. The application form for student has been simplified with minimal uploading of scanned documents by students on NSP. Hence, the role of the Institute Nodal officer becomes very critical in the entire chain of verification process. The Institute Nodal officer using NSP must adhere to the following:

1. **Institute Registration Process**
   a) The Institute/School/ITI shall possess a valid AISHE/DISE/NCVT/SCVT code, before registering on NSP.
   b) The Institute/School/ITI with valid AISHE/DISE/NCVT/SCVT codes can register on NSP. To know whether Institute/School/ITI is registered on NSP Portal or not, go to https://scholarships.gov.in and click on "Search Institute/School/ITI".
   c) The Institute/School/ITI, with valid AISHE/DISE/NCVT/SCVT code and not registered on NSP can request the District or State Nodal Officer, of any Scholarship scheme onboarded on NSP, to add it on NSP.
   d) The District or State Nodal Officer will search for the Institute based on AISHE/DISE/NCVT/SCVT code. In case the institute is not registered, the Nodal Officer can add it by providing the requisite details. The system generated User credentials and password will be sent on the mobile number provided.
   e) Colleges/Universities/Institutes/Schools and any other educational establishments onboarded on NSP shall be referred to as Institutes.
2. **Institute Nodal Officer: Registration process**
   a) From Academic Year 2019-20 onwards, Institute logging in the first time will have to mandatorily fill the Institute Nodal Officer Registration Form.
   b) The Institute Nodal officer will login on NSP using the user credentials, and complete Institute Nodal Officer Registration Form by entering his/her details and uploading the identity document. The Institute Nodal officer after locking the form using the OTP received, will take the print, paste his/her photograph on the Form, get it attested by the Institute Head (Signature and Institute seal/stamp), will submit the physical form to the respective District/ State/ Ministry Nodal officer of any scheme onboarded on NSP.

c) The District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer will verify the physical form and the details entered in system, and approve/reject the Institute Nodal Officer Registration Form details on NSP using the option "Verify Institute Registration Form" under the Administration section in his login. The User credentials and new password will be sent to the registered mobile number of the Institute Nodal officer. The original physical copy of the form should be kept with District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer and a duplicate copy is to be shared with Institute Nodal officer, who shall keep the same in Institute's records.

d) The institute Nodal officer can login using the new User credentials, password and OTP received on his/her mobile number. The concerned officer can reset the password by clicking the "Forgot Password" on Institute Login page on NSP.

e) For the cases of registration, where previous Institute Nodal has been transferred and has not provided the login credentials to the new Institute Nodal Officer, the new Institute Nodal Officer shall formally request District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer to change the mobile number and send the login credentials to the new mobile number. The new Nodal Officer is responsible for updating the profile with his/her credentials.

f) In case the new Institute Nodal Officer has access to the previous Nodal Officer, the registered mobile number can be changed by existing Nodal Officer. The system asks for the OTP on previous mobile number and the new mobile number to be registered. The existing Nodal Officer is also primarily responsible for updating the profile with credentials of the new Nodal Officer.

3. <u>Institute Nodal Officer: Profile updation</u>

a) The Institute Nodal Officer shall submit the Institute details in the profile, and select the Course Levels offered by the Institute.

b) The Institute Nodal Officer shall ensure that the profile details of the Institute are updated from time to time.

c) The Institute Nodal Officer shall submit the correct bank account details of the Institute.

d) The Institute Nodal Officer shall update the offered courses and course fee charged for each course Level.

e) The Institute Nodal Officer shall regularly change the password.

f) The Institute Nodal Officer shall ensure that the profile is updated profile with the details of the New Nodal officer before updating the mobile number and email ID, in case of change of Nodal officer.

4. 1st Level Verification Process & Steps

a) The Institute Nodal officer must verify the correctness of details in the application form and uploaded documents submitted by the student/ applicant, and maintain physical copies of supporting documents submitted by the student/ applicant. The District/State/Ministry Nodal Officer can ask for copies of these documents from the Institute Nodal Officers, as and when required.

b) The Institute Nodal officer has the option to either Verify the application, Reject the application or Defect the application. In case she/he chooses to Reject or Defect the application, the reasons for rejection or defect must be provided, so that the same can be displayed to the student/applicant.

c) The Application defected by the Institute will be returned to student/applicant for correcting the same, and once submitted by the student/applicant, the application will be shown under Reverification section of NSP application.

d) The Institute Nodal Officer shall ensure that appropriate due diligence is done before verification of applications in accordance with the Scheme guidelines, and internal procedure as prescribed by Institute authorities / Government are followed.

e) The Institute Nodal Officer shall ensure that the applications are scrutinized well-in-time by the Institute, thus avoiding the last-minute rush to verify the applications.

f) The Institute Nodal Officer shall ensure that there are no pending applications, as on last date of L1 verification for that particular scheme, and all applications submitted by students/applicants to the Institute are scrutinized (verified/rejected/defected along with appropriate reason, as the case may be).

g) The Institute Nodal Officer can mark any application as Fake at any stage before the payment is made, using the option "Mark as Fake" under the Verification section in his/her profile, in case a fraud is suspected in the application.

4.2.3. District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer

The primary role of District/ State/ Ministry Nodal officer is 2nd/3rd Level verification (as per the scheme guidelines) of the applications submitted at NSP and verified by Institutes. The District/ State/ Ministry Nodal officer using NSP must comply with the following-

1. District/ State level Nodal Officer User Creation Process

a) The login credentials for State Nodal Officers are created when the Ministry Nodal officers create the user for State. The Ministry Nodal officer enters the following details

to create the State user – State Name, State Nodal Officer Name, Designation, Mobile No., Email ID and Address of the State Nodal Officer. Once these details are entered in the system, a unique User name is generated by the system, and username and password is sent to the mobile no. of State Nodal Officer as registered by the Ministry Nodal officer.

b) The login credentials for District Nodal Officers are created when the State Nodal officers create the user for District. The State Nodal officer enters the following details to create the District user – District Name, District Nodal Officer Name, Designation, Mobile No., Email ID and Address of the District Nodal Officer. Once these details are entered in the system, a unique User name is generated by the system, and username and password is sent to the mobile no. of District Nodal Officer as registered by the State Nodal officer.

c) In case of change in District Nodal officer, she/he shall approach the State Nodal Officer with a request to reset the password and change mobile number.

d) Similarly, in case of State Nodal Officer, she/he shall approach Ministry level Nodal officer with a request to reset the password and change mobile number.

2. <u>District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer: Adding / Verification of Institute(s)</u>

a) The District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer reset the password of a registered Institute using the option "Reset Institute Login Password" under the Administration section in his/her profile. He/She shall search for the Institute using Institute Name or AISHE/DISE/NCVT/SCVT Code. He/She can select the Institute from the list displayed in search results, and click on reset the password. He/She also has the facility to change the mobile number of Institute Nodal Officer through this option, so that the OTP is received on the mobile number of current officer.

b) The District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer can add new Institute using the option "Add Institute/School" under the Administration section in his/her profile. He/She shall search for the Institute using Institute Name or AISHE/DISE/NCVT/SCVT Code. If the Institute is already registered, the District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer can reset the password. If Institute is not registered, he/she can register the Institute and create User credentials of the Institute by providing details such as Institute Nodal Officer Name and Mobile number. The User credentials will be generated by the system, and will be sent as an SMS to the provided mobile number. The Institute Nodal Officer can then proceed for the Institute Nodal Officer registration as per the process.

c) The District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer shall ensure that the Institute Nodal Officer registration is approved on the NSP portal after physically verifying the certified Institute Registration form submitted by the Institute Nodal Officer, along with photograph and identity proof.

3. 2nd Level Verification Process & Steps

a) The District/ State/ Ministry Nodal Officer shall verify the correctness of details in the application form and uploaded documents submitted by the student/applicant as per guidelines of the related scheme.

b) The District / State / Ministry Level Nodal officer can either Verify the application, Defect the Application, Reject the applications or Mark the application as Fake. In case she/he chooses to Defect the Application, Reject the application or Mark the application as fake, the reasons must be provided, so that the same can be displayed to the student/applicant.

c) The District / State / Ministry Level Nodal officer shall monitor overall pendency of the applications for the scheme at Institute Level.

d) The District / State / Ministry Level Nodal officer shall ensure that the applications are scrutinized well-in-time by the Institute, thus avoiding the last-minute rush to verify the applications.

4. 3rd Level Verification Process & Steps

a) For the schemes that require third level of verification, the State/ Ministry Nodal Officer shall follow the same process as followed for 2nd Level Verification.

4.2.4. Scheme owner Ministries / Departments / Other Govt. bodies

The primary role of the Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/Other Govt. bodies is to onboard the scheme at NSP, and monitor the overall progress of the scheme. This includes all three types of schemes, i.e. Central Schemes, Centrally Sponsored Schemes and State Schemes. The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies must:

a) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall provide confirmation for adherence to the NSP guidelines.

b) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall provide Scheme guidelines, Configuration details, FAQs to NIC.

c) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall provide PFMS configuration details (agency ID, Agency name, PFMS scheme code, DBT mission code, beneficiary type, payment purpose code) at the time of onboarding schemes only.
d) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall ensure that the given PFMS details are properly configured at PFMS Portal.
e) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall act as Data fiduciary for all data at NSP, for their scheme(s).
f) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall verify the correctness of Scheme configuration on NSP, including but not limited to the eligibility criteria, important dates etc.
g) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall monitor overall progress of the scheme, including L1 and L2/L3 verification progress.
h) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall issue timely instructions to District/State/Ministry Nodal Officers.
i) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall provide trainings to State/District Nodal officers from time to time.
j) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall provide name of Central / State Nodal Officers along with contact details to be displayed on the portal, and validate the same from time to time.
k) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall provide data and reports concerning the scheme to Govt. organizations, as may be required, using different pre-defined standard reports/ query generated by NSP.
l) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall abide by IT Act, Aadhaar Act and all other Government rules and regulations, from time to time.
m) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall operate NSP portal for all activities.
n) The Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies shall answer the queries of any law enforcement agency / RTI related to Scheme(s), Applications received at NSP, Timelines of the scheme(s), workflow, operations, servers, the content data and transaction data, etc.

4.2.5. Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology

The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) is the overall owner of National Scholarship Portal (NSP), and shall oversee the end-to-end processes of NSP. Designated officers from MeitY shall:

a) Provide administrative approvals for NSP to NIC.
b) Provide inputs for value addition in NSP.
c) Monitor and review the NSP.

4.2.6. Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Mission, Cabinet Secretariat

The Direct Benefit Transfer(DBT) Mission, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India plays pivotal role in administration of National Scholarship portal, and is primarily responsible for overall coordination with all the Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies, streamline the processes, and provide guidance to MeitY and NIC from time to time. Designated officers from DBT mission shall:

a) Provide approval for the Important dates and deadlines for all Schemes on-boarded on NSP.
b) Review the Standard Operating Procedures / Guidelines / User Manuals and other key documents, which are to be circulated to NSP users.
c) Provide guidance and coordinate for integration and data sharing with key bodies such as AISHE, DISE, NCVT, PFMS, UIDAI, etc.
d) Provide time-to-time guidance and suggestions for improvisations in NSP.
e) Review the forms/report/workflows etc. for NSP.

4.2.7. National Informatics Center (NIC)

National Information Center (NIC) is the technical agency for developing and maintaining the NSP, as per the guidance provide by Scheme Owner Ministries/Departments/Other Govt. bodies, DBT Mission and MeitY. NIC shall:

a) Develop and Maintain NSP infrastructure, including software and hardware components.
b) Receive the requests for onboarding of schemes at NSP.

c) Share the NSP guidelines with the Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies.
d) Configure the Scheme as per details provided by the Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments/ Other Govt. bodies.
e) Make changes in NSP application as per the recommendations of Scheme Owner Ministries/Departments/Other Govt. bodies, DBT Mission and MeitY.
f) Draft important documents such as Standard Operating Procedures, Guidelines, User Manuals etc. in English language, and regularly update the same.
g) Undertake security audit of NSP from time to time.
h) Manage the integrations and data exchange with external applications.
i) Manage helpdesk for operations at NSP.

4.2.8. Help Desk

Help Desk for NSP is maintained by NIC, with support from external call center agency. The primary role of the helpdesk is to provide first level assistance to the users of NSP. The helpdesk shall:

a) Assist the student(s)/applicant(s) for filling the registration and application forms, and provide technical support.
b) Escalate the critical issues to NSP team, as and when required.
c) Maintain a list of User category-wise FAQs for several users of the portal.
d) Keep the operators of call center agency updated about the processes at NSP.

5. General Terms and Conditions in respect of stakeholders:

1. The source code/ technical artifacts/ utilities of the application software developed by NIC will be the property of NIC. NIC can reuse the common and standard code/ artifacts/ utilities used in the software applications in other Govt. Projects wherever these are needed.
2. All parties undertake to act in good faith in respect of/with respect to each other's rights under this understanding and to adopt all reasonable measures to ensure the realization of the objectives of this project as per the roles and responsibilities.

3. Government may take action against any illegal or unauthorized activity on the NSP portal.
4. NIC will not be directly answering any RTI related queries/ clarifications/ law enforcement agency/ court cases and cannot be asked by respective Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments or Other Govt. bodies whose Scholarship Schemes are operational to be present before the Information Commission/ Courts either at State/ National levels or any other such body.
5. The outcome of validation(s) done by external agencies like PFMS, UIDAI will be treated as final. Any grievance related with such outcome should be dealt with by nodal verifying agency.
6. NIC shall be entitled for full disclaimer and immunity from all aspects of data and its safety along with its handling by any functionary of the respective Scheme Owner Ministries/ Departments or Other Govt. bodies.