

**GUIDELINES**

**FOR**

**RECOGNITION OF**

**“CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE”**



**Government of India**  
**Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship**  
**Shram Shakti Bahwan**  
**New Delhi-110001**  
**(w.e.f. 09.08.2019 and as revised on 31.05.2021 and 12.11.2021)**

## **Initiative for Setting up of Centre of Excellence in Skilling Ecosystem**

### **1. Introduction**

**1.1** Skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. Countries with higher levels and better standards of skills adjust more effectively to the challenges and opportunities in domestic and international job markets.

**1.2** Center of Excellence (CoE) is a body that provides leadership, best practices, research, support, training of trainers and skill training for a specific sector/s. The literal meaning of a Center of Excellence is – ‘A place where the highest standards are maintained.’

**1.3** Centre of Excellence in skilling ecosystem is envisioned to be one stop resource centre, established/working in partnership with industry to raise training standards, boost productivity, address emerging skill gaps and align training & research with industry needs.

**1.4** With the intent to overcome skill demand-supply mismatch, to have continuous supply of skilled workforce and disseminate best practices, “Centre of Excellence” is proposed to be recognized by Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). The initiative would encourage such bodies already engaged in research and development activities in the skilling domain and allied fields to work on key emerging areas where there is knowledge deficit or skill gap, so as to set up Centres of Excellence. In addition, a “Centre of Excellence” can also be recognized in the entrepreneurship education eco-system to encourage similarly instituted bodies to engage in the pursuit of entrepreneurship development programmes along with world-class facilities for incubation of start-ups and mentoring/ support in fund raising, technical, managerial and marketing aspects.

### **2. Background**

**2.1** As per the National Policy for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, 2015- “National Skills Universities and Institutes will be promoted in partnership with States as centres of excellence for skill development and training of trainers, either as de-novo institutions or as a part of existing university landscape. It is desired that these institutions become aspirational for candidates as other premier institutes around the country. These institutions, apart from skilling candidates through affiliates and training the trainers, will also conduct extensive research to enhance the quality and delivery of skill training by keeping abreast with latest developments in the skills space”.

**2.2** Centres of Excellence will be set up to ensure continuous supply of quality trainers in each sector. Special training programmes would be developed for training of trainers meant for overseas employment, including language training in collaboration with the concerned country. This could include exchange programmes, industry visits and simulated training. ICT enabled training and certification program for the trainers to train them within comforts of their homes, wherever feasible would also be promoted. Moreover, appropriate training in the latest technological developments for upgrading the technical skill of trainers, as per the requirement of the present scenario by the industry will also be undertaken.

Largely, three models exist in the skilling eco-system for operating- “Centre of Excellence”, placed at **Annexure-I**.

### **3. Functions of Centers of Excellence**

**3.1** The core functions of CoE should focus on areas like:

- ✓ To conduct high Quality Training in specific sectors with special focus on emerging technologies.
- ✓ To develop association between academia and industry for the benefit of the skill development sector.
- ✓ To conduct Research and Development in related fields and disseminate the results of the R&D and other activities through filing of patents and transforming them into sustainable business proposals/solutions.
- ✓ To upgrade the Centre's technical capacity, information architecture.
- ✓ To support creative and innovative proposals in terms of functions and facilities.
- ✓ To establish a sound new institutional base for executing the programmes/projects by strengthening the existing infrastructure.
- ✓ To foster relations across countries, between governments, workers, chambers of commerce, academia, industry and other Industrial associations in establishing collaborations of various projects of Institute/Organizations.
- ✓ To create network of nearby institutes for capacity building and mentoring support.
- ✓ To preferably establish an Entrepreneurship cell.
- ✓ For a CoE in the entrepreneurship education domain, to provide incubation / mentoring/ support to start-ups

### **4. Eligibility Conditions for getting recognition of CoE by MSDE:**

Recognition for CoE shall be granted/ awarded to a body (Govt. or Pvt.) university/ institute/ organization set up meeting the eligibility requirements as mentioned below and as per the guidelines issued by MSDE from time to time.

#### **4.1 Essential**

a) The CoE should be 5 years old or more with a proven track record of skill training and academic excellence or cutting-edge research in the Skill Development sector, as indicated by publications, research projects, consultancy assignments and should have a close industry connect. This condition can be relaxed in the case of:

- ✓ A CoE that has been established within an institution, such as a university (especially existing skill universities) or training providers where the latter – the promoting institution - is more than 5 years old with a proven track record in the skill development and related sectors;  
or

✓ A CoE that has been set up as a stand-alone independent centre by an industry skills council, the latter being more than 5 years old with a proven track record.

**b)** It should have adequate infrastructure in terms of land & building including, research scholars, modern equipment, sufficient funds to purchase plant/machinery. In the case of a CoE in the entrepreneurship education eco-system, it should have a functioning incubation centre with a mechanism for mentoring/ support in place.

**c)** The institute should have sufficient/competent manpower/research staff. The CoE should have competent core staff of the field and identified skilling areas in which CoE is operating.

**d)** CoE should have association with international bodies/universities/institutes in providing skill training/ entrepreneurship development and research support including developing NOS/QPs as per the industry standards and international requirements will be an added advantage.

**e)** It preferably should have basic level experience in running training of trainers, partnership programs with NSDC, DGT and other Ministries.

#### 4.2 Desirable

Sl. No.	Area/ Domain/ Quality Criteria	Requirements
1	Industry Interface  (Collaborations and Engagement with Industry)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MoUs, Agreements, industry feedback on the collaboration with industries and specific details of each one;</li> <li>• Number of Centres co-created with Industry participation;</li> <li>• Details of local companies/businesses in the training of students at their workplace.</li> </ul>
2	Research and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Research Projects handled;</li> <li>• Any patents or innovation;</li> <li>• Consultancy assignments.</li> </ul>
3	Organizational Structure/ Institutional arrangement/ Academic Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational structure with well-defined roles of each stakeholder;</li> <li>• Dean/ Head to have more than two decades of industry experience;</li> <li>• Details of the academic/ trainer staff and bifurcation in terms of permanent and contractual basis (More than 50% of the staff has to be permanent);</li> <li>• The ratio of the trainer to students to be followed as per the respective norms of the sector/Qualifications and schemes.</li> </ul>

Sl. No.	Area/ Domain/ Quality Criteria	Requirements
4	Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has required infrastructure and latest tools &amp; equipment to conduct different stated activities of CoE. (Minimum space area is mandatory to get recognition);</li> <li>• The specifications of the space and equipment will be as per the respective accreditation norms of the different Qualifications/trades in which the training is being conducted.</li> </ul>
5	Advocacy/Communication, communication strategy/ engagement activities for providing information to and gaining feedback from key stakeholders (employers, parents, students etc.), and planning service delivery based on the feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of workshops/conferences organized;</li> <li>• Communication strategy to reach out to different target groups;</li> <li>• Details of recent (in last two years) meetings held with communities apart from students.</li> </ul>
6	Student support/Counseling service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there is a student support/counseling service in the Centre;</li> <li>• Details of the qualification of the counselor.</li> </ul>
7	Training of Trainers (undertakes regular reviews of teachers/trainers to ensure learning is relevant to industry practice, including identifying where innovative teaching learning methodology/innovative pedagogy can be incorporated into learning programmes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well defined ToT plan in place;</li> <li>• Details of ToT conducted in last two years.</li> </ul>
8	Incubation/ Mentoring support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incubation centre in place (<i>this would be an essential condition for a CoE in the entrepreneurship education eco-system</i>);</li> <li>• Details of any incubation projects in last two years;</li> <li>• Details of the networking/mentoring support given to nearby institutes.</li> </ul>
9	IT support/ Technology intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of ICT in training of students and monitoring activities.</li> </ul>
10	Availability of updated learning resources  (Regular reviews of learning resources to ensure they remain current and relevant to industry practice, including identifying where innovative resources can be incorporated into learning programmes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review mechanism for learning resources in place.</li> </ul>

Sl. No.	Area/ Domain/ Quality Criteria	Requirements
11	Inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of Infrastructure and learning technology for differently-abled.</li> </ul>

## 5. Recognition:

**5.1** A Standing Committee chaired by Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), has been constituted in the Ministry for recognition for Centres of Excellence. This is the central committee looking into all aspects of implementing the policy, setting of procedures, terms & conditions and other aspects of this initiative from time to time and when needed. The committee is responsible for evaluating proposals and laying down the parameters and norms for assessing the CoE as required. The power to approve/ recognize/ reject/ cancel/ withdraw a proposal shall rest upon the Standing Committee. The recognition may be initially granted for a period of five years or once a centre recognized as “Centre of Excellence” is liable to be derecognized at any time as deemed by the Standing Committee. MSDE may at its discretion, itself or through its authorized representative evaluate the work undertaken by CoE and its progress over a period of time. *The Standing Committee would be assisted by officers of the Ministry, as decided from time to time for undertaking field visit, making preliminary assessment of a proposal and submit reports to the Standing Committee within stipulated time period as contained in the Guidelines. The Economic and Policy Division headed by Senior Economic Adviser/ Economic Adviser would function as the Secretariat for the purpose of this Guidelines and Senior Economic Adviser/Economic Adviser may entrust the responsibility of assisting the Committee with any organization under/related to the Ministry, including the NSDC and every efforts should be made to take every inspection by a joint inspection team consisting of two or more officers, except if so required, in the cases of institutes under the Central/State Governments to which even single member inspection teams can be sent. It is to mention that decision to renew/reject/de-recognize may be taken before the end of 5 years.*

## 6. Proposal Submission:

**6.1** Prospective Applicants may send the proposals (both soft copy and physical copy) to the nodal officer by email/ post on the address specified below:

Senior Economic Adviser,  
Economic and Policy Wing,  
Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship,  
Room No. 201, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, PTI Building,  
4 Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001 Phone: 011-2346 5841  
Email: [santanu.mitra@nic.in](mailto:santanu.mitra@nic.in) (copy to: [om.thakur@gov.in](mailto:om.thakur@gov.in), [abhishek.meena88@gov.in](mailto:abhishek.meena88@gov.in))

**6.2** Application for recognition of Centre of Excellence shall be made as per the prescribed proforma at **Annexure-II** and the copy of documents & certificates to be submitted are as per **Annexure-III**. *The timelines for different stages of consideration and processing of any proposal are as given in Annexure IV.*

## **7. Implementation of the guidelines**

**7.1** The revised guidelines, so stated above and along with its Annexures, shall come into immediate effect. All actions/ decisions taken, including granting of CoE status to institutions, under the guidelines of August 9, 2019 will remain in force. *Any deviation from the timelines as detailed above can be made only with the approval of Chairperson of the Standing Committee.*

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### Existing Models of Centre of Excellence



#### **Model 1: Centers within a training institution**

The most common is establishing a center of excellence within an institution, such as a university (especially existing skill universities) or training providers. Existing facilities may be used, or new ones may be constructed. The institution once declared as a CoE can be elevated from "good" to "great" by acquiring expert/ master trainers, upgrading existing facilities, acquiring tools, equipment and facilities as per the market requirement, introducing domain-specific blended learning. Typically, this center will become a model of best practice in the designated field. This approach enables the new center to take advantage of the reputation and resources of an existing institution with an established reputation in the skill domain. The CoE could partner with various industries, government, sector skill councils, and industry bodies to upscale its competency and the existing Skill Universities may adopt this model if they meet the criteria for recognition.

**One of the examples** in this case is Centre of Public Policy (CoE) at IIMB- is an independent public interest-oriented policy think tank engaged in pioneering research, teaching, training and capacity building. The Centre established in 2000 through a partnership agreement between the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Government of India (GoI), United Nations Development Programme and IIMB aspires to lead policy-thinking and praxis in India, promoting equitable, inclusive and sustainable solutions to the concerns of citizens and public governance.

#### **Model 2: Stand-alone independent centers**

In some situations, a center of excellence is set up from scratch on a brownfield or Greenfield site not connected to an existing institution. This requires intensive capital and human resources investment, as all facilities, recruitment, operational structures, and processes need to be established. This may take several years, so a positive reputation needs to be quickly established. Involving industry in co-financing and sponsoring the center can be highly effective. These centers may be linked to wider governance or organizational structures.

**For example,** a stand-alone center may be established by an industry skills council that has identified training needs that cannot be addressed by existing providers. There are several advantages to linking a new center to an industry skills council or similar industry body, including the ability to use established governance structures, and immediate links with industry and government policy priorities. Example in this case is the: Tata Institute of Social



Sciences and UNFPA have launched a Centre of Excellence on Youth and Adolescents. It focuses on research and policy advocacy for advancing young people's agenda.

### **Model 3: Networks of excellence**

These are organizational structures or agencies that bring existing training providers together in a network. This can be an appropriate option when good-quality training providers operate in isolation from each other or do not collaborate with industry.

Establishing a network does not involve the physical construction of new training facilities. Capacity-building efforts are focused on existing providers. These may involve upgrading equipment, strengthening human resources, and the granting of a recognized "kitemark" or certification of quality.

Networks of excellence can be an effective means of ensuring that provision in specific areas is aligned with government policy priorities. They are also particularly useful in situations where in the skills need of a particular sector or sub-sector are diverse.

**Examples:** CII Institute of Logistics, Chennai, provides specialized Services to build Leadership, Strategy for Sustainability, Identify and Adapt Clean Technologies and Management, Enhance Energy efficiency and become Environment friendly, adopt world class practices in Logistics and Manufacturing Management.

**Proforma for Recognition of Centre of Excellence:**

1. Name of the Organization:
2. Address with E-mail and Phone No.:
3. Registration No. and date:
4. Year-wise financial status of the Organization of last 5 years; income and expenditure:
5. Whether the Organization has its own building if yes, give details of infrastructure available along with equipment, vehicle etc. of the place which is sought to be recognized as CoE:
6. Details/Profile of Personnel employed in the CoE:
7. The details of objectives of the established CoE, with an elaborate justification:
8. Whether any grant has been received from Central/ State Govt./Funding Agencies for projects being undertaken by CoE, if so, the details thereof:
9. Track record of meritorious accomplishments /awards etc. during the last five years by Centre of Excellence:
10. Performance Desirables of CoE for which recognition is sought:

<b>SL. NO.</b>	<b>PARTICULARS</b>	<b>DETAILS</b>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MoUs/ agreements with industries</li> <li>• Number of centres co-created with Industry participation</li> <li>• Engagement of local companies/businesses in the training of students at their workplace</li> </ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Research Projects/consultancy assignments handled</li> </ul>	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational structure with well-defined roles of each stakeholder</li> <li>• Dean/ Head to have more than two decades of industry experience</li> <li>• Academic/ trainer staff and bifurcation in terms of permanent and contractual basis (More than 50% of the staff has to be permanent)</li> <li>• Ratio of trainer to students</li> </ul>	

SL. NO.	PARTICULARS	DETAILS
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure and latest tools, equipment available to conduct different stated activities of CoE</li> </ul>	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of workshops/ conferences organized</li> <li>• Communication strategy to reach out to different target groups</li> <li>• Details of recent (in last two years) meetings held with communities apart from students</li> </ul>	
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student support/counseling service available</li> </ul>	
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of ToT conducted in last two years</li> </ul>	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incubation centre, if any</li> <li>• Details of any incubation projects in last two years</li> <li>• Details of the networking / mentoring support given to nearby institutes</li> </ul>	
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology support in training</li> <li>• Availability of updated learning resources</li> </ul>	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of professional staff employed by CoE (Full time/ part time&amp; contractual)</li> </ul>	

Name and signature of the General Secretary/  
President/Chief Executive/Proprietor of the Organization  
with Seal of Office

**1. CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE ATTACHED WITH THE APPLICATION**

- i. Application as per Annexure – II
- ii. Two copies of Detailed Project Report (DPR) of the Proposal
- iii. Attested copies of the Registration Certificate, Memorandum of Association and By-laws of the Organization in case of Non-Governmental Organization/Institute
- iv. Attested copy of the Audited Statement of Account for the last 3 years
- v. A note of past activities especially those related to Skill Development Sector
- vi. The list of publications by CoE, if any
- vii. Documents supporting the previous track record of working in the field of proposed excellence

**2. CERTIFICATE TO BE SUBMITTED WITH THE APPLICATION**

CERTIFIED THAT:

1. We shall abide by all the Terms and Conditions of the CoE guidelines
2. We shall furnish such periodical/special reports as may be required by MSDE and its attached offices
3. MSDE may at their discretion, themselves or through their authorized representative evaluate the work undertaken by CoE and its progress over a period of time
4. The undersigned shall be personally responsible for the credibility and authenticity of the information provided and documents attached with the proposal and legally liable for any default in this regard
5. Separate records for skill development projects will be maintained

Name and signature of the General Secretary/  
President/Chief Executive/Proprietor of the Organization  
with Seal of Office

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Process/Stages of Application</b>	<b>Timelines</b>
1.	<i>Submission of Application by Individual Skill University/Institutes/Organization</i>	
2.	<i>Verification of Submitted Proposal by Ministry</i>	<i>20 days</i>
3.	<i>Clarification regarding the submitted Application/Documents by Ministry if any *</i>	<i>Within 20 days from date of submission of Application</i>
4.	<i>Field Visit of suitable proposal</i>	<i>Within the 25 days of Verification of documents.</i>
5.	<i>Submission of Field Visit report</i>	<i>Within 10 days from the date of Field Visit</i>
6.	<i>Standing Committee Meeting under the Chairmanship of Secretary, MSDE</i>	<i>Within 15 days from the date of submission of filed visit report.</i>

*\* In case of incomplete applications or in case where some clarification is sought by Ministry, the maximum time limit for completion of the CoE proposal will start from the date of re-submission of complete proposal.*

- ❖ The proposal of CoE will be closed within 90 days from the date of the submission of the proposal. This maximum time limit can only be relaxed by the approval of Chairperson, Standing Committee under extre-ordinary circumstances. The Standing Committee would try to sit once in a quarter to consider all pending cases not exceeding 90 days from the date of receipt of the concerned applications.*