

RASHTRIYA UCHCHATAR SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (RUSA)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The important guiding principles of RUSA are:

1. **Focus on Quality and Research**

RUSA focuses on better quality of state higher education institutions. The aim is to achieve mass access to higher education with high quality standards. States must ensure that all their institutions adopt NAAC accreditation as the mandatory quality assurance framework, and simultaneously seek to upgrade the overall academic quality by implementing reforms. They will be encouraged to promote research and innovation in their institutions. Since research focus can be judged both from input efforts and outcome indicators, the SHEPS are expected to have a balanced appreciation of both aspects. States and institutions are expected to honestly declare their present status in this area and outline specific strategies for improvement, including the use of information and communications technologies (ICT). There is a need to improve resource allocation for universities to enable good quality research and innovation. Criteria such as the number of research publications, impact factors of journals in which papers are published, citations, the amount of research funding attracted, etc., should be considered for faculty promotions.

2. **Norm-based and Outcome-dependent Funding**

The cornerstone around which RUSA is designed is that funding under it is norm based and future grants are outcome dependent. The central funding is strategic and based on SHEPs, which serve as a benchmark against which the performance of a state and its institutions is graded. Future funding is decided on the basis of past achievements and utilization of funds submitted to MHRD.

3. **Incentivizing and Disincentivizing**

RUSA incentivizes and disincentivizes state actions. Not only is compliance to rules, regulations and fulfilment of norms supported by incentives, but non-performance or non-fulfilment of prerequisites and norms invites reduced allocations for states and institutions. This is intended to make the scheme not only demand driven, but also competitive. States and institutions are encouraged to compete with each other in order to reap the benefits of competition-based formulaic grants.

4. **Apolitical Decision Making**

Another basic tenet of RUSA is that the decision making is done in an unbiased, apolitical and professional manner, on the basis of the SHEPs and the performance of the states on the predefined parameters. The process of decision making and its result are transparent and the

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methods impartial. It is expected that the states would also be as unbiased, apolitical and professional while planning and ushering governance reforms at their level. In order to effectively implement these reforms, the selection of leadership positions in state universities should take into account the imperatives of merit and performance.

5. **Autonomy**

Autonomy is an indispensable condition for quality and accountability. RUSA envisages greater autonomy for institutions in terms of decision making. The institutions will have full liberty to plan specific interventions depending on their special needs and requirements. Some key concerns in enforcement of university autonomy are as follows:

Revisiting the acts: There is a need to revisit the acts of various state universities to see if there are some clauses detrimental to their autonomy.

Streamlining the recruitment process: Universities must have the autonomy to recruit the most competent faculty as per laid-down procedures and purely on the basis of merit.

Membership of governing bodies: A university is administered by its senior functionaries under the guidance of its statutory bodies such as the executive committee, syndicate, senate, etc. The persons to be nominated to these bodies must have specialized knowledge in the relevant disciplines and should not have conflict of interests in so far as decision making in the university is concerned. These bodies should predominantly consist of members from academic background.

Institutional leadership: It is the duty of the Vice Chancellor to safeguard the autonomy of the university. The increasing trend of appointing civil servants as heads of educational institutions needs to be reviewed. Special RUSA orientation programmes or conferences on the management of universities should be organized to enable the Vice Chancellors, Directors, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Deans and Heads of Departments to hone their management skills.

6. **Disclosure-based Governance**

Disclosure-based governance must be followed by institutions with regard to their decisions and outcomes. RUSA envisages greater participation of all stakeholders, where the institutions are responsible for their quality not just to the regulatory authorities but also to the students, parents and the society. A policy of full disclosure and clean governance is the first step towards establishing such a system of higher education.

7. **Equity-based development**

Equity-based development initiatives must form an essential part of any development or expansion plans, both at the state and institution levels. Any growth in the higher education sector must create equal opportunities for women, disadvantaged classes and the differently abled. Also, development must have a greater focus on serving the rural and tribal areas. The plan appraisal process would take this aspect into account while deciding the allocations. Well-calibrated equity strategies must be built into the entire state planning process.

INSTITUTIONAL HIERARCHY:

RUSA is implemented and monitored through an institutional structure comprising the National Mission Authority, Project Approval Board and the National Project Directorate and Technical Support Group at the centre and the State Higher Education Council and State Project Directorate and Technical Support Group at the state level.

The Institutional structure envisaged under RUSA at Centre, State, and Institutional level is given below.



NMA COMPOSITION

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has constituted a National Mission Authority with the following composition:

- Union Human Resource Development Minister – Chairperson
- Member, Planning Commission (in charge of higher education)
- Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development - Vice-Chairperson
- Chairperson UGC, Co Vice Chairperson
- Chairperson, AICTE
- Chairpersons of the SHECs of all states
- Three Experts in the field of Higher Education
- Financial Advisor to MHRD
- Chairperson, MCI
- Chairperson, BCI
- Secretary, Agriculture
- Secretary, Culture
- Secretary, Health
- Secretary, S&T
- Secretary, Sports
- Representative of Ministry of Finance
- Joint Secretary (Higher Education) – Member Secretary

NMA FUNCTIONS

The National Mission Authority, besides providing guidance and directions for maximizing gains from the project:

- Delineates overall policy and planning
- Reviews functioning of Project Approval Board
- Allocates funds to Project Approval Board for release to States
- Commissions and Reviews findings from policy reform, thematic and evaluation studies

NMA MINUTES OF MEETING

The Minutes of all NMA meetings will, for ensuring transparency in selections and other decisions, be regularly published here.

PAB COMPOSITION

The Project Approval Board has the following composition:

- Secretary (Higher Education) – Chairman
- Chairman UGC, Co-Chairman
- Vice Chairman, UGC
- Chairman AICTE
- Secretary, UGC
- Chairman SHEC of the concerned State
- Two experts in Higher Education Sector
- Financial Advisor in MHRD
- Advisor (Higher Education), Planning Commission
- Joint Secretary (Higher Education) – Convener

PAB FUNCTIONS

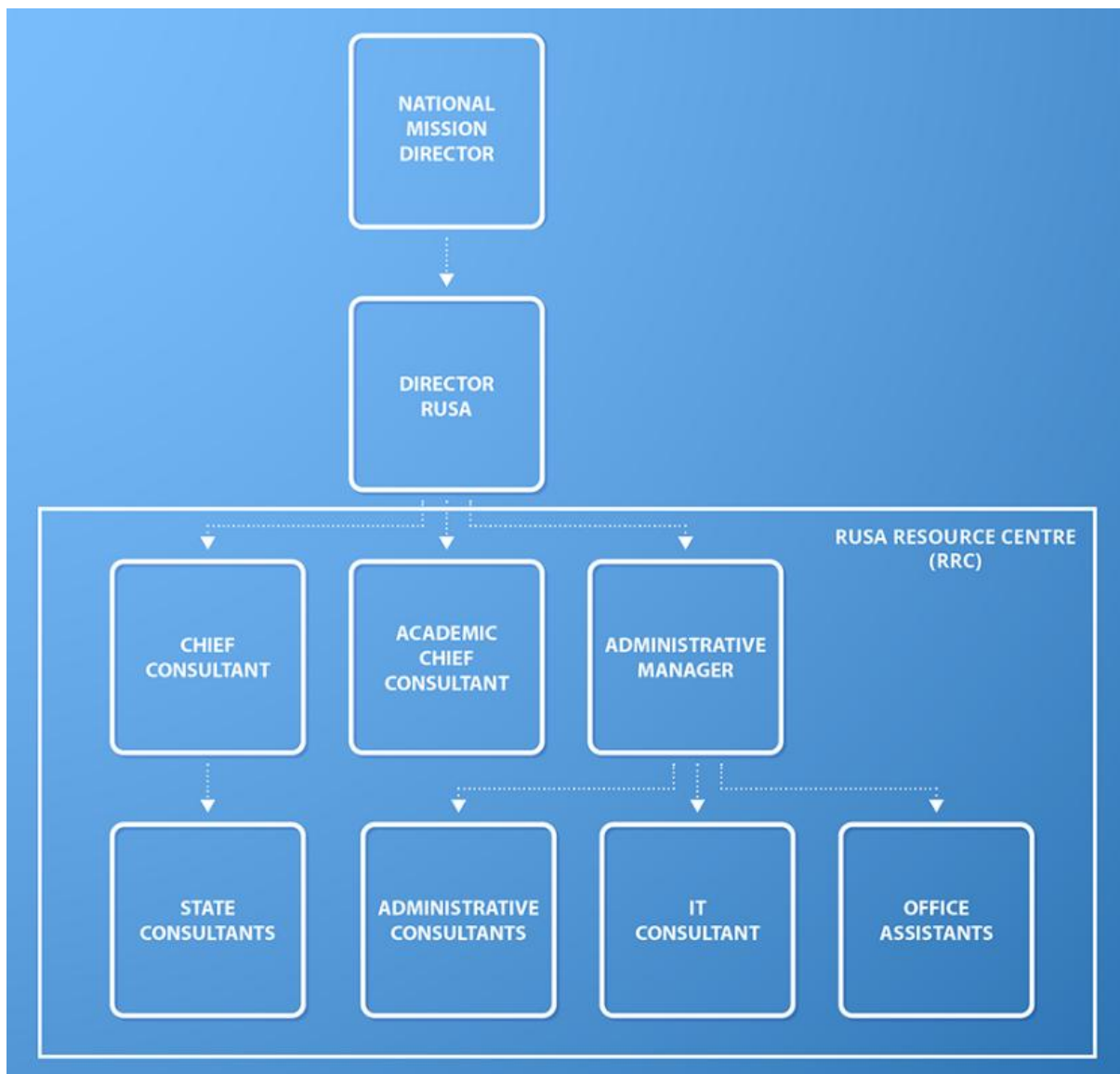
The Project Approval Board carries out the following functions:

- Examines, appraises and approves State Higher Education Plans
- Assesses performance of states and institutions
- Approves release of funds

RRC OVERVIEW

The RUSA Resource Centre is a Technical Support Group run by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) at the request of the Ministry. RRC provides evidence based support to the National Mission Directorate, MHRD, in the implementation of the scheme. It serves as a think tank by providing support to the Ministry by ensuring robust monitoring and oversight of the scheme.

Organogram of RRC is given below:



RRC FUNCTIONS

The following will be the functions of the RRC:

1. Monitor flow of funds and information
2. Appraise State Higher Education Plans and engage with SHECs
3. Engage with MIS provider to plan, coordinate and manage MIS
4. Generate MIS reports as required • Conduct evaluation studies
5. Provide all operational, technical, logistical and managerial support to NMA, PAB and National Project Directorate
6. Appoint consultants for project monitoring, designing, technical inputs and any other purpose and for a period and on such conditions of engagements as deemed necessary
7. Appraisal of DPRs of the States and recommending to Central Government for release of funds on that basis
8. Monitoring and Evaluation of Fund Utilization by the States on achievement of physical and financial targets against timelines.