Guidelines for Inter- Departmental /Multi-Investigator Projects with Different Departments/Schools/Centres of Shivaji University, Kolhapur

1. **A Nodal Officer/Co-ordinator:** Appointed with due regulatory compliances by the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor.

2. Advisory Committee:

2.1 Composition: The advisory committee consists of Vice Chancellor as Chairman, Pro Vice Chancellor, Deans all faculties, Director-IIL, Nodal officer as member secretary and other nominees by the Chairman, ensuring strategic alignment with institutional goals.

2.2 Expert Nominations: Subject-matter experts (02 each of internal and external) nominated by the VC should be included to provide guidance on the scientific, ethical, and practical aspects of the research projects.

2.3 Meeting Schedule: Biannual meetings should be scheduled to review broader strategic initiatives, discuss major outcomes, and provide high-level advice on new directions or challenges.

2.4 Role of Advisory Committee: This committee should focus more on offering strategic advice, identifying emerging trends, and recommending changes to the institution's research strategy rather than micromanaging individual projects.

3. Monitoring Committee

3.1 Composition: The monitoring committee consists of Pro Vice Chancellor as Chairman, Director-IIL, Nodal officer as member secretary and other PIs and Co-PIs of the proposals.

3.2 Expert Members: In addition to key investigators, involve experts from relevant fields to provide technical advice, identify potential risks, and ensure that the research adheres to institutional standards and goals.

3.3 Meeting Frequency: Quarterly meetings (or more frequent, depending on the project's complexity) could be scheduled to track progress, identify challenges, and address issues. Meeting minutes should be circulated to all stakeholders for transparency.

3.4 Metrics and Reporting: The committee should develop and monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) for each project. Regular progress reports should be submitted by investigators for review.

4. Role of Nodal Officer/Co-ordinator:

The Nodal Officer/Coordinator serves as a critical link between all stakeholders in a multi-investigator project, ensuring the project's seamless proposal, operation through effective communication, coordination, and management of resources. Their role is vital for

maintaining project momentum, fostering collaboration, and overseeing the smooth execution of research objectives by following the guidelines as mentioned below.

4.1 Primary Liaison: The Nodal Officer will act as the central point of contact between the investigators, departments, monitoring committees, and any external bodies, such as funding agencies/PAIR Hub etc. for successful preparation of consolidated proposal and submission as per guidelines of the funding agency. This role ensures that communication is efficient, clear, and consistent across all parties involved in the project.

4.2 Effective Communication: Ensuring updates, challenges, and changes are communicated between all project stakeholders, fostering transparency and clarity.

4.3 Meeting Coordination: Organizing regular meetings (quarterly or as necessary) for project stakeholders, including investigators, monitoring committees, and advisory bodies through due regulatory approval.

4.4 Agenda Preparation and Minutes: Preparing the meeting agenda in advance, records meeting minutes, and ensures that action items are tracked and followed up on to maintain progress.

4.5 Progress Updates: Keeping all stakeholders informed about key project milestones, developments, or issues that could impact the timeline, resources, or outcomes.

4.6 Notifications of Changes: Notification of relevant parties about changes in timelines, resources, or any emerging risks that could threaten project success with due regulatory approval.

4.7 Maintain Documentation: Ensuring all project documentation (e.g., research progress reports, meeting minutes, approvals, and compliance records) is well-organized and easily accessible.

4.8 Report Preparation: Preparing and submiting periodic progress reports to funding bodies, institutional committees, and other stakeholders, ensuring that all documentation is up-to-date and compliant.

4.9 Facilitates Communication: Bridging communication gaps between various departments and investigators, ensuring that everyone understands their roles, research goals, and expectations for the project with due knowledge of authorities.

4.10 Ensure Integration: Helping to integrate efforts across various departments and disciplines to maintain alignment with the overall project goals.

4.11 Conflict Management: Acts as the point of contact for resolving issues or conflicts that may arise among investigators or departments, ensuring that conflicts are addressed promptly and effectively to avoid disruptions with the knowledge of the authorities.

4.12 Efficient Resolution: Facilitates collaborative problem-solving approaches that support the overall project objective.

4.13 Promote Collaboration: Organizes team-building activities and knowledge-sharing sessions to foster collaboration and synergy between investigators from different disciplines or departments.

4.14 Ensure Alignment: Helping to ensure all team members are aligned with the project's overall objectives and that collaborative efforts remain focused and effective.

4.15 Progress Monitoring: Tracking the progress of investigators and ensures that deliverables and milestones are met on schedule.

4.16 Troubleshoot Delays: Identification and addressing delays or bottlenecks, proposing solutions or corrective actions to keep the project on track with the knowledge of the authorities

4.17 Track KPIs: Monitoring key performance indicators (KPIs) related to the project's progress, such as milestones achieved, budget adherence, and resource utilization.

4.18 Report to Committees: Regularly reporting performance assessments to the Monitoring Committee and Advisory Committee to ensure accountability and transparency.

4.19 Identify Risks: Identification of potential risks that could impact the project's success (e.g., funding shortfalls, technical difficulties, or delays).

4.20 Mitigate Risks: Working proactively with the project team to develop strategies for mitigating risks and minimizing negative impacts on the project with the knowledge.

4.21 Monitor Spending: Working with the financial office to track the project's budget and ensures funds are being used efficiently and appropriately.

4.22 Financial Reporting: Reporting any financial discrepancies or concerns to investigators and committees, ensuring financial transparency.

4.23 Funding Coordination: Serving as the primary point of contact with funding agencies, ensuring that the project receives the necessary financial support.

4.24 Grant Assistance: Assist in preparing grant applications, disbursement schedules, and ensuring that funds are being used according to the project's budget in consultation with the authority.

4.25 Training Programs: Organizing training programs or workshops to build the capacity of team members, ensuring they are equipped with the necessary skills for effective project execution with due approval from the authority.

4.26 Knowledge Transfer: Facilitating the transfer of knowledge, best practices, and methodologies across the team to improve project outcomes with due approval from the authority.

4.27 Facilitate Knowledge Sharing: Supporting the dissemination of research findings by organizing conferences, seminars, or publications with due approval from the authority.

4.28 Ensure Broad Reach: Helping to ensure that the project's results are shared not only within the institution but also with the broader scientific community and relevant stakeholders with due approval from the authority.

4.29 End-of-Project Reporting: At the conclusion of the project, preparing a final report that includes outcomes, lessons learned, utilization certificates and recommendations for future multi-investigator projects with due approval from the authority.

4.30 Presentation to Committees: Presenting the final report to the Monitoring Committee and Advisory Committee, providing insights on the project's success and areas for improvement with due approval from the authority.

4.31 All the above records should be copied to the CUD section for official record.

4.32 In case of undesirable events Hon'ble Vice Chancellor will appoint a new Nodal Officer/Co-ordinator for the seamless running of the project.

5. Principal Investigator: The Principal Investigator (PI) in a multi-investigator scientific project has a leadership role that extends beyond conducting research to include overseeing the entire project, ensuring ethical conduct, securing and managing funding, fostering team collaboration, and disseminating findings. The PI's should, ensure that the scientific objectives are met while maintaining high standards of quality, integrity, and collaboration. In addition, the PI's should closely work and support the Nodal Officer/Co-ordinator for the seamless processing of the documentations and deliverables.

5.1 Assisting the Nodal Officer/Co-ordinator in the execution of the overall project, contribute in the overall decision making and collaboration.

5.2 Research Design and Execution: Developing the project's research framework, including hypotheses, methods, approaches and manage components within the overall research plan.

5.3 Compliance: Ensuring ethical standards and regulatory requirements are met (e.g., IRB approval, safety protocols).

5.4 Team Leadership: Supervise the project's investigators and other team members, providing guidance and support.

5.5 Reporting: Prepare and submit progress reports, final reports, and results to the Nodal Officer/Co-ordinator.

5.6 Dissemination: Oversee the publication and communication of findings, ensuring proper credit and acknowledgment of contributors.

6. Co-Principal Investigators: Assisting in managing the project, supervise specific research areas, and contribute to decision-making and collaboration.

6.1 Collaborative Leadership: Assisting the lead PI in overseeing the project's execution and provide input into strategic decisions.

6.2 Research Execution: Managing specific components or sub-projects within the overall research plan.

6.3 Supervision: Overseeing the work of research teams under their purview, including graduate students, postdocs, and technical staff.

6.4 Funding and Resources: Supporting in securing funding and managing resources within their assigned research areas.

6.5 Task Management: Ensuring timely delivery of results and milestones within their area of responsibility.

6.6 Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Fostering communication and collaboration between different research areas and teams.

6.7 Investigators: Contribution to specialized expertise, conduct research tasks, and collaborate on project components.

7. Facility Housing and Accessibility

7.1 Centralized Common Research Facility: Developing a strategy for housing acquired research facilities in a centralized, shared space for easy access by all involved PI's Co-PI's , departments/school/centre and other stakeholders through designated physical spaces with the approval of the authority and required regulatory bodies at per with the CFC/DST SAIF regulations.

7.2 Accessibility and Security: Ensuring that access to facilities is seamless but secure by implementing access protocols and scheduling systems ensuring the availability of resources.

7.3 Feedback Mechanism from each user to be mandatory and kept by the in-charge of the facility.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Effectiveness

Annual Review of Policy: The policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Research to ensure that it adapts to changing research landscapes, new technological advancements, or evolving institutional priorities and feedback

9. Ethical and Legal Considerations

Ethics Committees and Compliance with Regulations: Ensuring that ethical review processes are in place for multi-investigator projects, with specific guidelines for handling sensitive data, intellectual property, for compliance with national and international regulations concerning research, data protection, and intellectual property management by signing Mutual Non-Disclosure Agreement.