

**ANUSANDHAN NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION BILL, 2023****Ministry of Science and Technology****INTRODUCTION:**

The Anusandhan National Research Foundation Bill, 2023 was introduced in Lok Sabha on August 4, 2023. It repeals the Science and Engineering Research Board Act, 2008 and dissolves the Science and Engineering Research Board set up under it. The Bill provides for establishing the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (NRF).

**It seeks to allocate ₹50,000 crore over five years for promoting research and innovation across various levels of research institutions, colleges, and universities in the country.**

**FUNCTIONS:**

NRF will be the apex body in the country to provide strategic direction for research, innovation, and entrepreneurship in the fields of:

- Natural sciences including mathematics,
- Engineering and technology,
- Environmental and earth sciences,
- Health and agriculture, and
- Scientific and technological interfaces of humanities and social sciences.

**OBJECTIVES OF FOUNDATION:**

Foundation shall undertake suitable initiatives including the following:

- Preparing the roadmaps for short, medium and long term research and development.
- Facilitating research at academic and research institutions.
- Funding competitive peer-reviewed grant proposals to eligible persons.
- Assisting in setting-up research infrastructure helping for scientific pursuit focusing on national priorities.
- Organizing programmes to identify scientific and practical solutions for societal, developmental, financial and techno-economic challenges.
- Encouraging collaboration from scientists from within and outside India.
- Encouraging public and private sector enterprises to invest in the activities of foundation.

In addition to the above objectives the foundation either by itself or through an agency will undertake an annual survey of outcomes of scientific research in India excluding strategic areas determined by the governing board.

**GOVERNING BOARD:**

**The Indian Prime Minister will serve as the chairman of the NRF's Governing Board.** The Board will give the Foundation strategic guidance and oversee execution. The Principal Scientific Advisor serves as Member Secretary, the Union Ministers of Science and Technology and Education serve as Vice Presidents, and the Secretaries of the Departments of Science and Technology, Biotechnology, and Scientific and Industrial Research complete the Board.

Additional Board members may be appointed or proposed by the President of the Board. There may be up to six specialists from the natural sciences, engineering, and technology, as well as (i) up to five members from corporate organizations or industries, (ii) one person from the social sciences and humanities, and (iii) one member from the business world. A Chief Executive Officer may be chosen by the President, who must hold the position of Additional Secretary or above.

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL:**

An Executive Council will oversee implementation for the Foundation. The Executive Council's duties include:

- Evaluating requests for financial assistance;
- Establishing rules for requests for financial assistance, including criteria for extending assistance and grounds for revocation; and
- Creating and maintaining the Foundation's budget.

**The Council will have the authority to designate an officer to visit grant applicants to confirm the accuracy of their applications.**

The **Head of the Council will be the Principal Scientific Advisor**. Other members of the Council include the Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation and (i) secretaries of several departments of the central government, such as Science and Technology, Higher Education, Health Research, Agricultural Research, and Defense Research. Up to two secretaries of departments not covered by the Bill and up to three experts may be proposed or appointed by the President of the Foundation to the Council.

**FUNDS OF FOUNDATION:**

The Fund for Science and Engineering Research established by the 2008 Act will serve as the Foundation's primary source of funding, along with donations to the fund, grants and loans from the federal government, revenue from investments of the Foundation's funds received, and third-party income.

The Foundation will establish the following funds for funding allocation:

- The Anusandhan National Research Foundation Fund for salaries, benefits, and administrative costs;
- The Innovation Fund for funding exceptional creativity in the areas supported by the Foundation;
- The Science and Engineering Research Fund for carrying out projects started under the 2008 Act; and

- One or more special purpose funds for any particular project or purpose;

The use of these Funds will be governed by regulations set by the federal government. Annually, CAG will audit the Foundation's financial records.

### **POWER TO MAKE RULES :**

The Central Government may, by notification, and subject to the condition of previous publications make rules not inconsistent with the provisions of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation Bill, 2023.

In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters:

- Qualifications, honorarium, experience and allowances payable to and other terms and conditions of service of members and experts of governing board, Members of Executive Council, Members of Chief Executive Officers, other Officers and employees.
- Financial rules regarding utilization of amount of funds.
- The form, manner and times for preparation for the budget for the next financial year as well as the annual report by the Executive Council.