

Ashoka Centre for Digitalisation, AI and Society

Call for proposals

The *Centre for Digitalisation, AI and Society* seeks research proposals on all aspects of digitalisation in public life including, but not limited to, the problems outlined in the accompanying documents.

The Centre plans to start by funding a small number (about half a dozen) research projects of about ₹5-7 lakhs each for one year, as seed funding. It is envisaged that the main costs involved in the projects will be towards funding of researchers. The projects should preferably be multidisciplinary and involve researchers from more than one discipline. Involvement of collaborators external to Ashoka will be highly encouraged. The Centre looks forward to receiving a broad range of proposals that are innovative, scalable, and impactful.

1 Scope

The project durations should be of one year to start with. They may cover all aspects of digitalisation in public life including digital identity and authentication, health, education, media, financial inclusion, digital currency and payment systems, electoral and citizen registries, health registries and electronic health records, public credit registries including account aggregator systems of the type being proposed by the Government of India, income and other tax registries, applications of AI, and social media.

2 Eligibility

This call for proposals is open to faculty members from all departments and centres of Ashoka University. External collaborations with other departments and universities/NGOs/International organisations etc. are highly encouraged. The principal investigator must however be an Ashoka faculty.

3 Proposal requirements and evaluation criteria

The proposals should meet the following requirements. They should

- relate to digitalisation or applications of AI in public life in the Indian context
- outline a reasonable, cost efficient, and effective plan of action
- include a plan to raise funds beyond the seed amount, and be scalable in the future
- should be innovative, impactful, and preferably interdisciplinary
- suggest clear research deliverables and identify potential impact

The proposals should adhere to the following template (to the extent possible) and be limited to about 2000 words (excluding CVs):

Section	Heading
1	Project title and abstract
2	Context and background
3	Vision and goals
4	Activities, plan of action, and timeline
5	Deliverables
6	Budget
7	Future aims and possible source(s) of funding
8	CVs and short notes on each team member indicating how they will contribute to the project

3.1 Proposal evaluation

The Centre advisory committee comprising Professors Bhaskar Dutta (Economics), Anurag Agrawal (TSB) and Partha Pratim Das (CS), with Professor Subhashis Banerjee (CS) as the convenor, will oversee the proposal review process and decide on the funding.

3.2 Application process

Interested principal investigators are requested to submit the proposals (title, abstract, brief plan of action, tentative team members) by October 15, 2023 by email to *suban@ashoka.edu.in*.