



RASTA NOTES #03 (2021)

RASTA CGP 2.0: Review Process & Updates

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RESPONSE TO RASTA SECOND CALL: CGP 2.0

In response to the CGP Second Call for Research Proposals, the RASTA Secretariat received over 160 applications from all parts of the country and from foreign institutes as well. Compared to the First Round (CGP 1.0), the application submission process, the review process, and the quality of research proposals improved considerably in the CGP 2.0. Figures below present the location-wise and theme-wise distribution of applications received. The highest number of applications were received from Islamabad (28%), followed by Punjab (27%) and Sindh (18%). Similarly, the highest number of applications were received under the theme 'Public Policy Process & Economic Development' (42%), followed by 'Agricultural Markets' (32%), 'Real Estate Markets' (17%) and 'Foreign Aid Effectiveness' (9%).

Figure 1. Theme-wise applications received for CGP 2.0

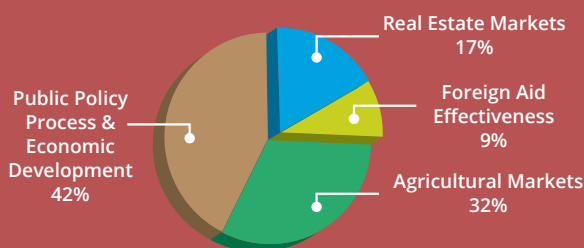
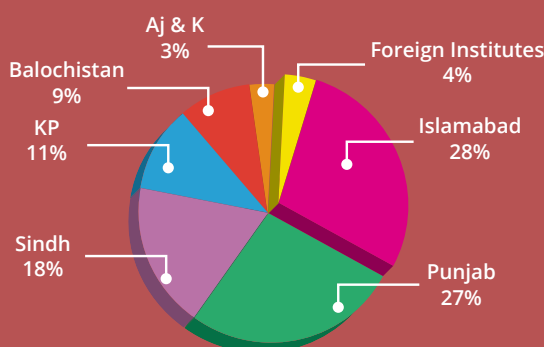


Figure 2. Location-wise applications received for CGP 2.0



Gender-wise distribution shows that 20% of research proposals were submitted by female applicants as 'Principal Investigator' and only 8% of the total applications received were submitted by 'graduate/postgraduate students'. RASTA encourages females and applicants from the less developed areas of Pakistan. Therefore, in light of the RASTA objectives and inclusion policy, we defined three Tiers giving equal opportunity to the applicants from less developed areas. Tier 1 includes applicants/institutes in the North of Punjab, Karachi and all foreign institutes; Tier 2 includes applicants/institutes in the South Punjab, interior Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) provinces; while Tier 3 includes applicants/institutes in Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJ&K). The Tier-wise distribution of CGP 2.0 shows that 20% applications were received from Tier 3, around 12% from Tier 2, and remaining 68% applications were from Tier 1.



THE REVIEW PROCESS

Keeping in view a large number of applications, transparency, and providing equal opportunity to all, the review process was completed in three stages: the Initial Review (stage 1, double-blind); the Detailed Review (stage 2, double-blind) of the shortlisted proposals; followed by presentations of shortlisted applicants in the CGP Review Workshop (stage 3).

In the initial and detailed review stages, two reviewers would review each research proposal without knowing the names and institutes of applicants. All reviewers evaluated proposals strictly in under the evaluation criteria set forth by the RASTA. They were asked to score each criterion on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=very good; and 5=excellent). Based on their evaluation, they were also asked to provide us with an overall score.

In the initial review stage (Table 1), 162 research proposals went through a double-blind review out of which 59 (36%) were successful for the second stage review. A research proposal was considered successful if the average score of two reviews was 3.5, 3.0 and 2.5 out of 5.0 for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3, respectively. Unsuccessful applicants were informed about the outcome and reviewers' comments on the research proposals were also shared.

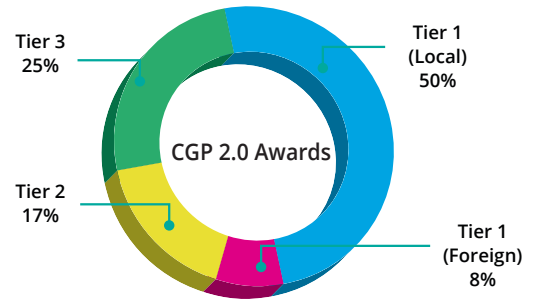
Table 1. Initial & Detailed Review Results (Stage 1 & 2)

		Total	Tier 1 (Local)	Tier 1 (Foreign)	Tier 2	Tier 3
INITIAL REVIEW (S1)	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED	162	108	6	29	19
	UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS (S1 REVIEW)	103	71	3	22	7
	RECOMMENDED FOR S2 REVIEW	59	37	3	7	12
	SUCCESS % (STAGE 1)	36%	34%	50%	24%	63%
DETAILED REVIEW (S2)	SHORTLISTED APPLICATIONS REVIEW (S2)	59	37	3	7	12
	UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS (S2 REVIEW)	27	19	1	3	4
	RECOMMENDED FOR REVIEW WORKSHOP (S3)	32	18	2	4	8
	SUCCESS % (STAGE 2)	54%	49%	67%	57%	67%

* Average review score to qualify stage 2 and review workshop: (a) Tier 1: 3.5/5.0 and 3.0/5.0 for students; (b) Tier 2: 3.0/5.0; and (c) Tier 3: 2.5/5.0.

In the second review stage, 59 successful research proposals from the initial review went through a shuffled double-blind review. As a result, out of the total, 32 (54%) were recommended for the CGP 2.0 Review Workshop. This time, besides assigning a score on the scale of 1.0 to 5.0 against all criteria and an overall score, the reviewers were also requested to suggest either (a) 'Not Recommended for the Review Workshop', or (b) 'Conditionally Recommended for the Review Workshop', or (c) 'Highly Recommended for the Review Workshop' based on their overall evaluation. Out of the 32 successful applications, 05 were marked as 'Highly Recommended' by both reviewers, 07 were recommended as 'Highly Recommended' & 'Conditional Recommended', while 10 were suggested 'Conditionally Recommended' by both reviewers. Seven research proposals went into a third blind review since there was a conflict in the reviewers' recommendations, i.e., the first reviewer rejected the proposal while the second reviewer highly recommended the proposal for the Workshop. As a result of the third review, 03 proposals got selected for the CGP 2.0 Review Workshop.

After a thorough review of proposals in the second stage, 32 (54%) were shortlisted for the CGP 2.0 Review Workshop. The reviewers evaluated all proposals strictly following the evaluation criteria set forth by the RASTA. All 32 applicants appeared before the RAC (online) with their research teams and presented their technical and financial proposals in the six-day CGP 2.0 Review Workshop. The RAC discussed all shortlisted proposals in a two-day post-Review Workshop (Decision Meetings), followed by a consultative workshop with the five applicants from Balochistan (Tier 3), and finally decided to award 12 research projects under RASTA CGP 2.0.



The RASTA CGP 2.0 Awards were announced in the month of July 2021. Award letters were issued to the RASTA Fellows (awardees) followed by signing of contracts between them and RASTA. The progress of all RASTA research projects will be regularly monitored from the 'RASTA M&E Desk' and mentoring has been provided to all research teams. Summary of awarded studies are available at the RASTA website www.pide.org.pk/rasta



RASTA THIRD CALL: CGP 3.0

RASTA CGP invites third round of research proposals on the following themes/sub-themes:

1. FOREIGN AID EFFECTIVENESS	2. TRADE, DOMESTIC COMMERCE & MARKETS
1.1. REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS IN PAKISTAN 1.2. EVALUATION OF DONOR-LED DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN PAKISTAN	2.1. EXPORT INDUSTRY: ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE IN ECONOMIC GROWTH 2.2. IMPORTS: ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE IN ECONOMIC GROWTH 2.3. RETAIL MARKETS 2.4. E-COMMERCE POTENTIAL 2.5. SALES TAX POLICY AND COMPLIANCE 2.6. REAL ESTATE MARKETS 2.7. CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

RASTA CGP 3.0 invites research proposals on the above listed theme/sub-themes. Studies on related sub-themes will also be entertained. Proposed studies must identify key policy issues and public policy decisions in Pakistan; assess outcomes of those decisions empirically; evaluate constraints to policy reform; and examine alternative policy recommendations to enhance their impact. The proposal submission is due by **30th November 2021**, midnight Pakistan Standard Time (PST). More details available on RASTA website. Don't forget to read FAQs too.