SENIOR AND JUNIOR RESEARCH INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

IN SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

GUIDELINES 2026-27

Odisha Research Centre (ORC), Bhubaneswar

In collaboration with

Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai

Last Date of Application: 15.11.2026

1. Background and Rationale

Odisha Research Centre (ORC), Bhubaneswar, is committed to advancing rigorous, interdisciplinary and Odisha-focused research on the State's society, history, culture, economy, ecology, heritage, knowledge systems, institutions and development experience. A sustained research ecosystem also requires systematic engagement with young scholars and graduates who can be trained in sound research methods and connected to the Centre's academic activities.

Odisha's internal diversity calls for a research network that is geographically broad, socially attentive and capable of generating district-level and community-level evidence. The Senior and Junior Research Internship Programme is therefore conceived as a structured pathway through which young researchers can work on carefully defined Odisha-focused issues under academic supervision leading to capacity-building of the selected pool of researchers.

The Senior and Junior Research Internship Programme shall be conducted by Odisha Research Centre (ORC), Bhubaneswar, in partnership with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai.

2. Objectives

- Provide young scholars and graduates meaningful exposure to research design, fieldwork, archival/documentary research, data collection and analysis, academic writing and policy-oriented research.
- Generate focused research outputs on contemporary, historical, cultural, social, economic and developmental questions concerning Odisha.
- Create a State-wide network of young researchers across diverse universities, colleges, regions and disciplinary backgrounds, including providing mentorship support and guidance.
- Strengthen the capacity of young researchers to work with qualitative, quantitative, archival, digital and interdisciplinary methodologies.
- Develop reusable research resources for ORC, including annotated bibliographies, field notes, interview materials, datasets, archival indexes and district-level documentation, where applicable.
- Encourage evidence-based public discussion and identify promising research questions that may subsequently develop into larger ORC projects, seminars, publications or collaborations.
- This is only a research-based capacity building programme and will not create any employer-employee relationship with ORC.

3. Programme Structure

Particulars	Senior Research Internship	Junior Research Internship
Number of positions	15	30
Minimum qualification	Master's Degree with at least 55% marks or equivalent grade in Social Sciences, Humanities or allied/interdisciplinary disciplines from a recognized university/institution.	Bachelor's Degree with at least 55% marks or equivalent grade in Social Sciences, Humanities or allied/interdisciplinary disciplines from a recognized university/institution.
Duration	6 months	3 months
Stipend	₹25,000 per month	₹15,000 per month
Nature	Hybrid	Hybrid

Note: The number of positions may be increased, reduced or left unfilled by ORC depending on the quality of applications, administrative requirements and availability of funds. Any category-wise relaxation or reservation, where applicable, shall be governed by the policy approved by the competent authority and specifically stated in the relevant call for applications.

4. Eligibility and Desirable Competencies

4.1 Academic eligibility: Applicants must satisfy the minimum academic qualification stated in Section 3. The qualifying degree must be from a recognized university or institution. *Under exceptional conditions, where the research proposal is relevant and outstanding, students in the final year of their Bachelor's and Master's degree can be considered for internship*. Eligibility shall be determined with reference to the closing date of the relevant call for applications.

4.2 Nature of Internship: Although the internship is a hybrid engagement, selected candidate must be able to devote the prescribed period to the internship and comply with the work schedule, fieldwork requirements and review process notified by ORC. Selected candidates will be required to attend various training programmes/capacity building modules to be imparted by TISS.

4.3 Desirable competencies: The following will be considered advantageous during evaluation:

- Understanding of basic research methodology and ability to formulate a clear research problem;
- Familiarity with qualitative and/or quantitative methods, archival research, field interviews, surveys or documentary analysis, as relevant;
- Ability to organize, interpret and present data or source material;
- Good written and oral communication skills;
- Working knowledge of standard office applications and, where relevant, statistical, GIS, reference-management, transcription, language-technology or data-visualization tools;
- Knowledge of Odia/other associated dialects relevant to the proposed field area will be an advantage where the research requires community or archival engagement.

5. Priority Research Areas

Applications shall be invited in Social Sciences, Humanities and allied/interdisciplinary fields. **Proposals should have a clear and substantive connection with issues of Odisha**. ORC may notify specific themes for a particular cycle. The following broad areas may be taken into consideration while developing research proposals:

5.1 Janjatiya/Tribal Studies and Indigenous Knowledge Systems. PVTGs and Scheduled Areas; customary institutions; tribal livelihoods and youth aspirations; FRA/PESA and local governance; forest-livelihood relationships; oral traditions; tribal languages; indigenous ecological knowledge; education, health and cultural change.

5.2 Odia Language, Literature, Heritage and Public History. Odia language movements and identity; literature and intellectual traditions; manuscript and archival studies; Jagannath studies; archaeology and museums; Buddhist, Jain and maritime heritage; folklore and oral history; crafts, performing arts and digital humanities.

5.3 Climate Change, Disaster Resilience, Coast and Water. Cyclone preparedness; climate adaptation; heat stress; drought and flood vulnerability; coastal erosion; mangroves; water security; community resilience; climate-linked mobility and traditional ecological knowledge.

5.4 Agriculture, Food Systems, Fisheries and Rural Transformation. Farmer incomes; millets; crop diversification; irrigation; FPOs and cooperatives; rural innovation; fisheries and aquaculture; coastal fishing communities; food systems, food security and rural entrepreneurship.

5.5 Migration, Labour, Livelihoods and Regional Disparities. Seasonal/distress migration; informal labour; remittances; labour networks; rural employment; youth migration; inter-district disparities; KBK and other lagging regions; social protection and livelihood transitions.

5.6 Women-led Development, SHGs and Gender. Mission Shakti and SHG enterprise; women's access to finance and markets; leadership in local institutions; unpaid care work; digital financial inclusion; gender and technology; livelihood, nutrition and social change.

5.7 Public Health, Nutrition and Traditional Healing. Maternal and child health; tribal health; nutrition; mental health; ageing; health access; indigenous healing traditions; public-health systems; digital health and health inequalities.

5.8 Education, Skills, Youth and Employment. Higher-education access; NEP implementation; tribal education; teacher education; graduate employability; skills and apprenticeships; youth aspirations; digital learning; educational technology and rural digital divides.

5.9 Governance, Decentralisation and Public Policy. Panchayati Raj; municipal governance; public-service delivery; welfare implementation; programme evaluation; public finance; digital governance; citizen access to services; evidence-based administration.

5.10 Mining, Industrialisation, MSMEs and Just Transition. Mining-region development; displacement and rehabilitation; District Mineral Foundation-related outcomes; mineral districts; industrial corridors; MSMEs; local employment; environmental justice; circular economy and green transition.

5.11 Urbanisation, Housing, Mobility and Municipal Systems. Emerging urban centres; affordable housing and rental markets; water and sanitation; waste management; urban flooding; mobility and parking; informal settlements; street vending; peri-urban change and municipal finance.

5.12 Digital Transformation, AI and Odisha Knowledge Infrastructure. Odia and tribal language technologies; AI and public services; digital inclusion; data repositories; digital archives; social-science data systems; algorithmic governance; digital humanities and responsible use of emerging technologies.

5.13 Any other topic that is relevant for the village/town/panchayat/block or district, where the applicant resides may also be submitted for the consideration of the panel.

Applicants may submit proposals in closely related areas not expressly listed above, provided the proposal is firmly Odisha-focused, academically relevant and feasible within the internship period. Applicants may also involve any faculty member of his/her choice as their guide/academic mentor in conceptualizing/documenting research proposals.

All the above suggested topics are indicative in nature.

6. Application and Research Proposal

Applications shall ordinarily be submitted online through the official website of ORC (www.odisharesearchcentre.org).

6.1 Documents to be submitted

- Completed online application form;
- Curriculum Vitae (CV);
- Mark sheets/certificates relating to the qualifying degree;
- Research concept note in the prescribed format;
- Brief Statement of Interest explaining the applicant's research interests and the relevance of the internship to his/her academic development;
- Proof of year of graduation and declaration regarding non-enrolment in a full-time postgraduate programme, wherever applicable to Junior applicants;
- Identity and other declarations/documents specified in the call.

6.2 Research concept note

Category	Indicative length	Expected elements
Senior	1,500-2,000 words	Title; research problem; brief context/literature; research questions/objectives; study area; methodology; proposed sources/data; ethical considerations; expected output; six-month work plan.
Junior	1,000-1,200 words	Title; research problem; objectives/questions; brief context; proposed study area; methodology/sources; expected output; three-month work plan.

The concept note must be the applicant's own work. ORC may reject proposals that are excessively broad, purely descriptive, copied, fabricated, infeasible within the prescribed period or disconnected from Odisha.

7. Selection Process and Assessment

Selection shall ordinarily be undertaken in the following stages:

1. Stage – I: Verification of Eligibility
2. Stage – II: Evaluation of the Research Proposal
3. Stage – III: Shortlisting of eligible proposals/candidates.
4. Stage – IV: Pitching and Presentation before an Expert Committee.
5. Stage – V: Preparation of merit list and wait list, followed by approval of the competent authority

Only shortlisted applicants shall be invited for the pitch/interaction. The interaction will be held in office of the Odisha Research Centre, Bhubaneswar. The purpose of the interaction is to assess the applicant's understanding of the proposed problem, methodology, Odisha-specific context and capacity to execute the research within the prescribed period.

7.1 Indicative assessment rubric

Component	Marks	Assessment focus
Relevance to Odisha and ORC priorities	15	Importance and Odisha-specific relevance of the proposed research
Clarity of research problem/questions	10	Precision, coherence and researchability
Methodology and sources/data	15	Appropriateness, rigor and feasibility of method
Regional/contextual understanding	10	Understanding of study area, community, institution or historical context
Originality and expected value	5	Potential contribution to knowledge, evidence or documentation
Feasibility within internship period	5	Realistic scope, access and work plan
Written proposal subtotal	**60**	
Command over subject during pitch	10	Depth of understanding beyond the submitted text

Component	Marks	Assessment focus
Ability to explain and defend methodology	10	Research aptitude and methodological reasoning
Odisha-specific understanding/evidence	10	Awareness of relevant issues, sources and context
Communication and research trainability	10	Clarity, responsiveness and ability to work under supervision
Pitch/interaction subtotal	**40**	
Total	**100**	

8. Nature and Place of Internship

- The Internship Programme shall be conducted in **hybrid mode**, combining fieldwork, archival research, institutional visits and periodic engagement with Odisha Research Centre.
- Notwithstanding the above, every intern shall be required to visit Odisha Research Centre, Bhubaneswar from time to time, whenever called upon by ORC or considered necessary by the assigned Mentor/Programme Coordinator for orientation, research review, academic interaction, presentations, meetings, progress assessment or other programme-related purposes.
- Field visits, archival visits, interviews, surveys or other off-site research activities undertaken as part of the internship shall be consistent with the approved research proposal/work plan and, wherever required, undertaken with the knowledge or approval of the assigned Mentor/Programme Coordinator.
- Interns may also be assigned reasonable academic or research-related tasks connected with the programmes and activities of ORC, in addition to their individual research project, provided that such assignments do not materially interfere with the completion of the approved research work.
- Attendance and leave shall be governed by the offer letter and operational instructions issued by ORC. Unauthorized absence or persistent non-compliance may lead to withholding of stipend or discontinuation.

9. Mentorship, Review and Research Training

Each intern shall be assigned an ORC Research Mentor/Faculty Mentor. ORC may associate an external subject expert from a partner university, research institution or relevant academic network where specialized guidance is required.

At the commencement of the cohort, ORC may conduct a research orientation covering research design, qualitative and quantitative methods, fieldwork, research ethics, informed consent, archival research, data management, referencing, policy-brief writing, presentation skills and responsible use of digital/AI tools.

The internship shall ordinarily include structured progress reviews:

- Inception review: confirmation/refinement of research questions, methods, sources and work plan;
- Periodic mentor reviews: assessment of data/source collection, fieldwork and research progress;
- Mid-term review: formal review of progress and corrective guidance;
- Pre-final review: review of draft report/paper and supporting research material;
- Final presentation: presentation and defence of findings before ORC/appointed reviewers.

The mentor may require modification of the topic, research design, field area, sample, sources or output where this is necessary for feasibility, ethics, quality or alignment with ORC's research objectives.

10. Research Deliverables

Deliverable	Senior Research Internship	Junior Research Internship
Research design/inception note	Required	Required
Literature/data/source review	Detailed	Focused
Field/archival/data documentation	As applicable	As applicable
Main research output	Approx. 8,000-12,000 word research paper/report	Approx. 4,000-6,000 word research paper/research note
Research/policy brief	Required	Required
Supporting material	Annotated bibliography, cleaned dataset, field notes, interview schedule, archival index or equivalent, as applicable	Bibliography, research notes, field/data documentation or equivalent, as applicable
Final presentation	Required	Required

The exact format and word length may be modified by the mentor depending on the nature of the project. Completion of the prescribed outputs, clearance of any pending materials/data and satisfactory final review shall be conditions for issuance of the completion certificate.

11. Stipend and Admissible Support

- Senior Research Interns shall receive a stipend of ₹25,000 per month for the approved six-month period.
- Junior Research Interns shall receive a stipend of ₹15,000 per month for the approved three-month period.
- However, the release of the stipend will depend upon the completion of monthly milestones laid down in this regard.
- Payment shall be subject to satisfactory attendance, progress, submission of required reports and compliance with the terms of engagement.
- Travel and accommodation relating to the internship, including visits to Odisha Research Centre, Bhubaneswar, shall be provided by ORC. Such travel and accommodation shall be subject to prior approval, where applicable, and shall be governed by ORC's applicable financial and administrative rules.
- ORC may withhold or proportionately regulate stipend in cases of unauthorized absence, unsatisfactory progress, non-submission of required outputs or breach of the internship terms, after due consideration by the competent authority.

12. Research Ethics, Integrity and Use of AI

All interns shall maintain high standards of academic integrity and ethical research practice. The following principles are mandatory:

- No plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, manipulation of data, invented references or misrepresentation of field evidence;
- Proper citation and acknowledgment of all sources, datasets, archives, interviews, images and other materials used;
- Informed consent and appropriate safeguarding where research involves human participants, especially children, vulnerable communities, PVTGs, patients or sensitive personal information;
- Respect for community knowledge, cultural practices, sacred/sensitive material and restrictions on access or public disclosure;
- Secure handling of personal data, interview recordings, contact details and confidential institutional material;

- Disclosure of any use of generative AI or AI-assisted tools in drafting, coding, transcription, translation, literature support, analysis or visualization. AI-generated content may not substitute for original research judgment, field evidence or verification of sources;
- Compliance with any additional ethics review, permission, consent form or field protocol prescribed by ORC or the relevant partner institution.

Serious breach of research integrity may lead to rejection of the research output, recovery/withholding of stipend, termination of internship and ineligibility for future ORC programmes, subject to due process.

13. Data, Publication, Intellectual Property and Confidentiality

- All intellectual property generated, developed or created by an intern in the course of or arising out of the Internship Programme shall be the exclusive property of Odisha Research Centre (ORC).
- Interns shall receive due authorship or acknowledgment for substantive research work produced by them in accordance with accepted academic norms.
- All reports, presentations and publications arising directly from the internship shall acknowledge Odisha Research Centre and the internship programme.
- ORC shall be entitled to retain an institutional copy of research outputs and supporting material produced under the Programme and may archive, reproduce or disseminate approved outputs with due attribution, subject to confidentiality, ethics and publication clearance.
- Project data collected using ORC resources or under ORC-authorized fieldwork shall be deposited in the form prescribed by ORC. Public release or external transfer of datasets, recordings, photographs, transcripts or confidential records shall require prior approval where applicable.
- No intern shall publish, circulate or commercially use confidential or unpublished ORC material without authorization.
- Authorship on any subsequent publication shall be determined by actual scholarly contribution; internship supervision alone shall not automatically confer authorship.

14. Conduct, Discontinuation and General Conditions

- The internship is an academic/research engagement and does not constitute employment with ORC. Selection shall not confer any right, preference or assurance of future employment.
- Selection is provisional until verification of original documents and acceptance of the formal offer/terms issued by ORC.
- Any false declaration, forged document, material suppression of facts or misrepresentation may result in cancellation of candidature or termination of internship.
- Interns shall observe institutional discipline, workplace conduct, confidentiality, safety and all applicable ORC policies, including policies relating to prevention of sexual harassment and respectful workplace conduct.
- ORC may discontinue an internship for persistent unsatisfactory performance, misconduct, prolonged unauthorized absence, breach of confidentiality, research-integrity violation or non-compliance with the approved research plan, after recording reasons and providing an appropriate opportunity to respond wherever practicable.
- An intern seeking to withdraw before completion shall submit a written request. Stipend shall ordinarily be payable only up to the admissible period of satisfactory work completed, subject to ORC's decision.
- ORC reserves the right to modify the number of positions, research themes, schedule, selection process, work arrangements or operational conditions, or to postpone/cancel a cycle, in whole or in part, where administratively necessary.
- The decision of the competent authority of ORC on matters relating to eligibility, selection, interpretation of these Guidelines and continuation/completion of the internship shall be final, subject to applicable law and institutional rules.

15. Completion and Certification

A joint completion certificate shall be issued by Odisha Research Centre (ORC), Bhubaneswar and Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai only after the intern has satisfactorily completed the prescribed tenure, submitted all required research outputs and supporting material, made the final presentation, complied with clearance requirements and received certification from the assigned mentor/Programme Coordinator.