

CAG-ICSSR RESEARCH ARTICLE COMPETITION

(Guidelines for Applicants)

INTRODUCTION

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, the Supreme Audit Institution of India, has been providing evidence-based audit reports that ensure transparency, accountability, and good governance. The Office of the CAG of India, in a first-of-its-kind initiative, prepared a decadal publication of State Finances from the financial years 2013-14 to 2022-23. The publication provides fiscal data for all 28 states and 3 UTs across numerous fiscal parameters, including revenues, expenditure, public debt and liabilities, deficit indicators, and guarantees. This initiative significantly strengthens the democratisation of public finance data, enabling policymakers, researchers, analysts, and citizens to engage with reliable fiscal information with greater ease and transparency. The CAG and the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) have entered into a collaboration to conduct the CAG-ICSSR Research Article Competition.

OBJECTIVE

The key objective of this collaboration is to foster and improve research skills of students in colleges and universities in the country in the field of public finance and fiscal governance. The collaboration aims to generate informed awareness among Undergraduate (UG)/ Postgraduate (PG) and Doctoral students about the interpretation of data, and capacity building to foster social science research skills among the researchers. The programme aims at enhancing public understanding of Audit products, fiscal governance, and accountability.

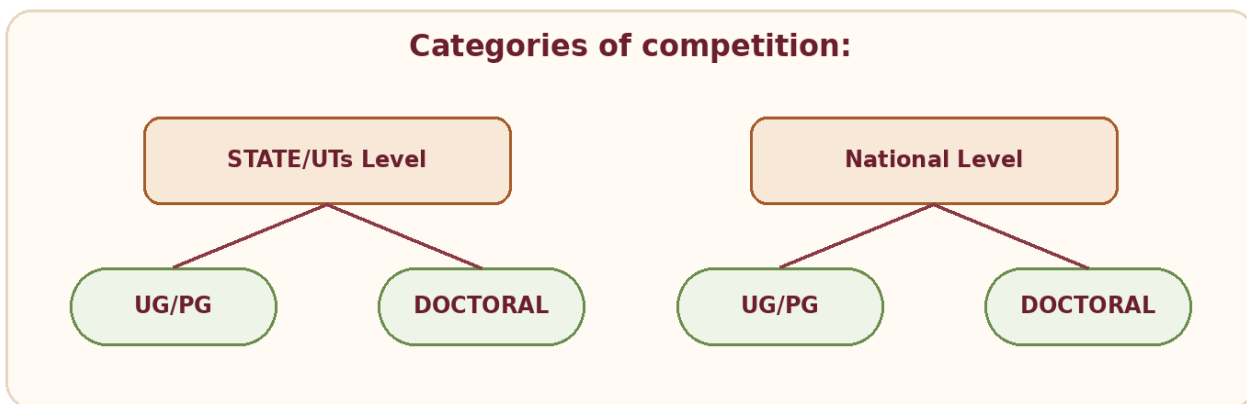
THEMES

The themes for the competition will be:

1. Fiscal Federalism and Governance
2. Social Sector Spending
3. Skilling, Employment and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)
4. Empowering Urban and Rural Local Bodies

ELIGIBILITY

1. The applicant must be a bona fide student of an Undergraduate/Postgraduate or Doctoral Programme.
2. Categories of competition:



3. The affiliated institution must be any of the following:
 - Institution of national importance, or
 - Recognised under Section 2(f)¹ and/or declared eligible for Central Assistance under Section 12(B)² of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956,
 - Institutions/colleges/universities ranked under the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) by the Ministry of Education, Government of India.
4. The participant must be a full-time bonafide student at the time of submission of the Research Article.

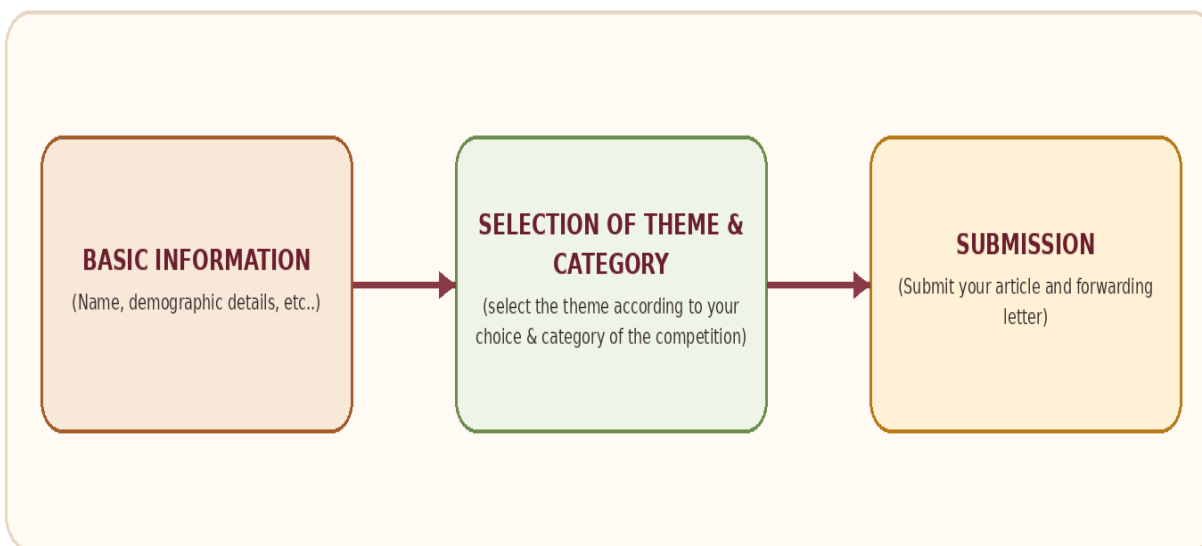
MODE OF PARTICIPATION AND ENTRY LIMIT

5. Only individual entries are allowed.
6. Only one entry per participant is permitted. However, a participant may take part in both the State/UT and National level competitions by registering separately for the State/UT and National level competitions.
7. Co-authored entries are not allowed.
8. Entries shall be submitted from the state of the affiliating institution.

HOW TO APPLY

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

9. Registration shall be from the ICSSR online platform.
10. Participants shall be provided with the state-wise report link through their registered email addresses for reference and academic study, or participants can access the state-wise audit reports of the concerned states using the link provided on the website of the CAG and the ICSSR.
11. Participant must submit a bona fide certificate as proof of enrollment in the prescribed format attached herewith.



¹ Recognition under Section 2(f) of the UGC Act, 1956 signifies that the institution is included in the list of universities maintained by the University Grants Commission. Such recognition establishes that the institution is duly constituted and meets the basic criteria prescribed for being treated as a university or higher educational institution under the Act.

² Inclusion under Section 12(B) of the UGC Act, 1956 signifies that the institution has been declared eligible by the University Grants Commission to receive financial assistance and grants. This indicates that the institution fulfils the additional standards and requirements prescribed by UGC for funding support towards academic, research, and infrastructural development.

SUBMISSION

12. Entries should be submitted in PDF format (Must be typed, not handwritten or scanned), and the word limit for the Research Article will be:

- UG/PG: 4,000 to 5,000 Words
- Doctoral Programme: 5,000 to 6,000 Words

13. The article should contain:

- Introduction
- Conceptual and theoretical background
- Statement of the problem
- Objectives
- Methodology (covering methodological approach, variables, tools employed)
- Data analysis and findings
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- Policy Suggestions and the Way Forward

14. Submission shall adhere to:

- Modern Language Association (9th edition)
- Times New Roman, 12-Point
- Standard margins
- Double spacing

15. Participants must ensure that the Research Article does not contain any information revealing the identity of the author(s). Inclusion of such identifying details shall result in disqualification from the review process.

PROCEDURE FOR AWARDS

16. The procedure for the award of the research article will be in multiple phases before the declaration of final results. All applications submitted to the ICSSR will be scrutinised and evaluated by Experts/Committees following a blind review process.

17. The expert committee will evaluate the article, and based on that, the top three research articles will be awarded.

18. Awards will be:

	STATE LEVEL	NATIONAL LEVEL
1ST PRIZE	75,000/-	1,25,000/-
2ND PRIZE	50,000/-	1,00,000/-
3RD PRIZE	25,000/-	75,000/-

19. The final authority for the interpretation of the guidelines or any such issue is vested with the Office of CAG of India & ICSSR.

OTHER CONDITIONS:

20. The Office of CAG of India and the ICSSR reserve the right to publish the Research Articles submitted under the CAG–ICSSR Research Article Competition.

21. The Office of CAG of India and the ICSSR reserve the right to reject any application without assigning any reason.

22. Incomplete applications in any respect will not be considered.

23. The final authority related to the interpretation of these guidelines or any other issue is vested with the Office of CAG of India and the ICSSR.

Important Dates:

	State level	National level
Registration Opens	01 June 2026 Onwards	1 June 2026 Onwards
Submission of Research Articles	01 July to 31 August 2026	01 August to 30 September 2026
Last Date of Submission	31 August 2026	30 September 2026

LINK FOR THE REGISTRATION: <https://app.icssr.org/>

*****BEST WISHES*****